WAR OF THE REVOLUTION SERIES

TWO YOUNG PATRIOTS

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

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TWO YOUNG PATRIOTS

WAR OF THE REVOLUTION SERIES.

By EVERETT T. TOMLINSON, Ph.D.

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES COPELAND.

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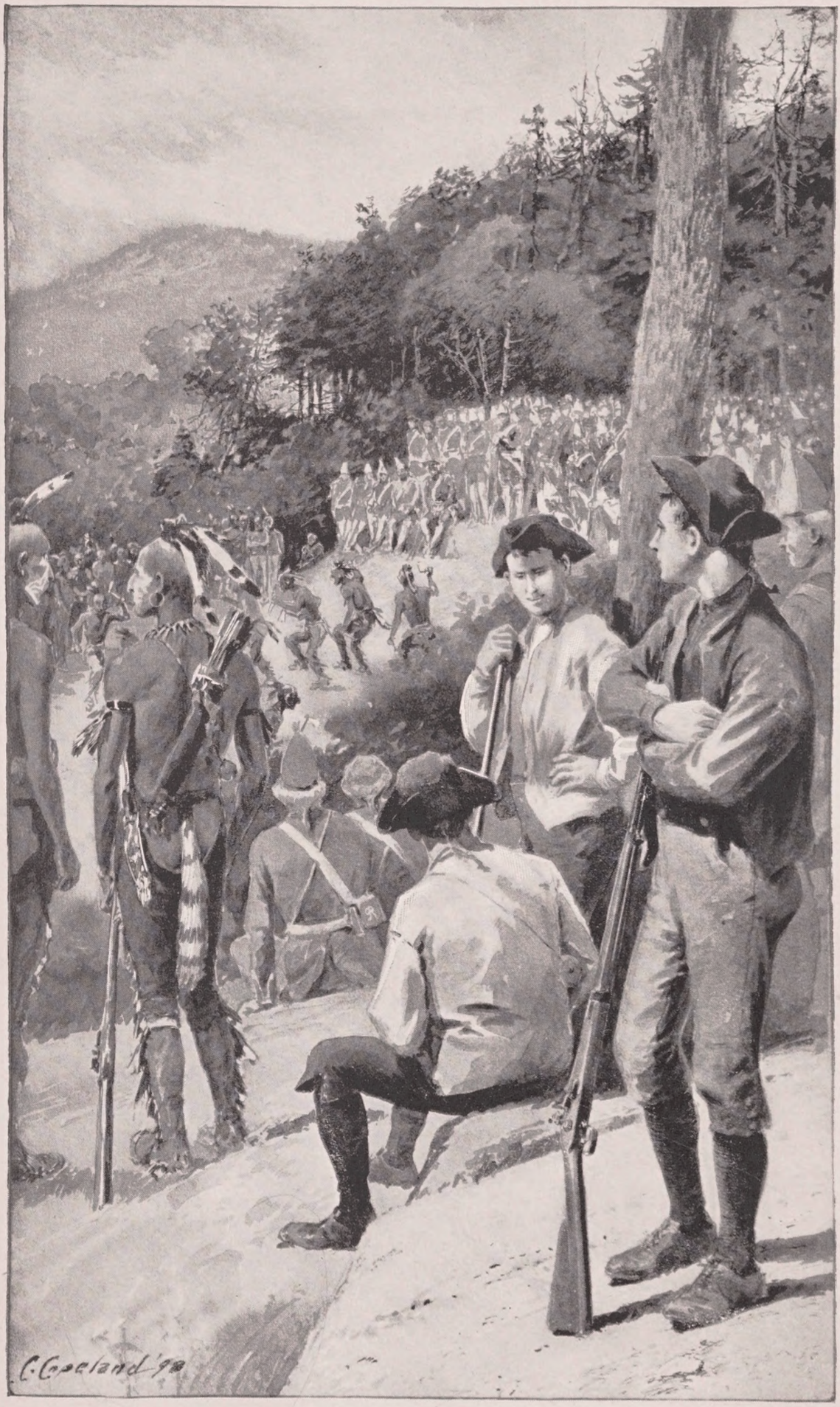

AN INDIAN WAR-DANCE FOLLOWED THE CONFERENCE.

TWO YOUNG PATRIOTS

OR

BOYS OF THE FRONTIER

A Story of Burgoyne's Invasion

BY

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

AUTHOR OF "THREE COLONIAL BOYS," "THREE YOUNG CONTINENTALS"
"WASHINGTON'S YOUNG AIDS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY

CHARLES COPELAND

BOSTON AND CHICAGO

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TWO YOUNG PATRIOTS.

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To

RUSSELL B. ORCUTT

PREFACE.

In the historical setting of this story I have made use of the works of Fiske, Dawson, Lossing, Stone, Drake, Neilson, Stedman, Wilkinson, Madame de Riedesel's Letters, and also the various local traditions and histories. I have endeavored not only to give my young readers a story, but also a correct outline of the invasion itself.

For many of the incidents and adventures there is warrant in the local and family records. I have, however, made use of a story-teller's license, and have ventured to modify and adapt some of these to the demands of this book. But although some of them are slightly varied in the use I have made of them, still I trust they will serve the purpose of imparting a true flavor to the narrative of the life and conditions of the region through which John Burgoyne passed with his army.

Above all, if this story shall deepen the love of country in the hearts of the oncoming generation, and teach them to place a higher value upon that for which so many of the "men of '76" (and '77) were willing to give even their lives, the work will have gained its own reward. To uphold that which our fathers' fathers strove to hold up, demands a patriotism as high as that which was manifested during the now famous invasion of John Burgoyne.

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON.

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TWO YOUNG PATRIOTS.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE FRONTIER.

"WE'VE lost another lamb. There are tracks all around the pen, and some pieces of wool on the bushes."

"That makes four we've lost in less than ten days, doesn't it?"

"Yes. We've lost more than we have left. Probably the others will be gone in ten days more."

"I heard the wolves howling last night, but I hoped they wouldn't be able to do any damage this time. It's too bad, Jairus. You'll have to try the trap again, I think."

"I'll try it, but it won't amount to much, I'm thinking. Where's Sam?"

"I saw him and Arthur go down towards the shore not long ago. I don't just know where they are. You haven't seen or heard anything more from Albany, have you?"

"Haven't heard a word, mother. I guess it's mostly talk, anyhow. Just now I'm a good deal more interested in the wolf question than I am in what General Burgoyne is doing, or what they say he's doing. I guess General Philip Schuyler will be able to look after him. But I'll look up the boys now, and see what we can do to put a damper on these wolves. They're growing bolder every night."

Thus speaking, Jairus Goodwin ran quickly out from the low log house which was his home, in search of his brother. He did not turn to see his mother, who was still standing in the doorway, evidently perplexed and sadly troubled over something. Just what it was could not be seen; for apparently on that June morning in 1777 there was nothing to alarm or vex her, unless it was the loss of lambs which the prowling wolves had carried away within the last ten days.

It did not appear, however, that her thoughts were of her loss; for long after Jairus had disappeared from sight she still remained in the doorway, looking out towards Lake Champlain as if she either was expecting some one to come from that direction, or was fearful that some one might come she did not wish to see.

But visitors at the Goodwin home were very few. Three years before this time the widow Goodwin, soon after the death of her husband, had crossed from the Vermont side to the New York side of Lake Champlain, and, almost the only settlers for

miles around, with her two boys, Jairus and Samuel, had made a new home in the wilderness. The other children in her family were grown and married, and had homes of their own.

A cordial invitation had been extended to Mrs. Goodwin to make her home with one of her daughters in Massachusetts, whence all the family had come a few years before; but partly for the sake of her two boys, now sturdy young fellows of seventeen and nineteen, and partly because of her desire to be independent, she had chosen to remain in the home on the frontier.

Troubles, however, are not prone to come singly, and the widow Goodwin's experience proved to be no exception to this rule. Her husband had not been dead three months before his brother laid claim to the land he had taken up and cleared. All considerations for the family, which ought to have appealed to him the more strongly in their time of need, were forgotten, and disregarding the protests of his own wife and children, and the pleadings of the widow and the fatherless, he had persisted in claiming what he insisted was his own.

And the laws had borne him out in his claim, as sometimes even the best of laws are found to be upon the side of the stronger. For a time the sorrowful woman did not know what to do. The daughter's home was still open to her, but the thought of her boys increased her desire to be independent for their sake as well as for her own; and

after hesitating for a month, she finally yielded to the urgent words of the lads and crossed the lake with their few possessions and took up a claim on the New York side of the lake.

There, little difficulty had been experienced in establishing themselves, perhaps one reason being that there were so few settlers in the region, that no one cared to dispute her claim.

Two years of the hardest kind of work had followed, and at the time when our story opens the results were plainly manifest. The little log house had some marks of comfort about it. Flowers were in bloom, and vines were climbing over its rough sides. Wild flowers many of them were it is true, but none the less beautiful on that account, and quick to respond to the care which the widow Goodwin, in spite of the arduous duties of the pioneer life, had somehow found time to bestow upon them.

Nor had Jairus and Samuel been idle. They had built two barns and a sheep-pen, the latter at some distance from the house and near a spring which never failed in its supply of fresh cool water. Many of the trees of the forest had fallen by their hands, and little patches of corn and grain could be seen here and there as the results of their labors.

Difficult as the struggle with nature always is, there were some things which apparently were on the side of the settlers. The waters of the lake abounded in fish, and slight efforts were required to

supply their table with bass, and pickerel, and perch. Many a time the boys had come home from their labors, and almost exhausted though they were, had found a relaxation in taking their rude skiff and pushing out a little distance into the lake, and there landing the hungry fish which eagerly seized the bait they offered.

Then, too, there were times when the forests would be darkened by immense flocks of pigeons, and frequently the boys had kept their table well supplied with the birds they had brought to the ground, simply by striking them with a pole.

The red deer were so plentiful and so little afraid of men that no difficulty was experienced in shooting all they needed for food, and beyond that the young frontiersmen never cared to go.

Killing for the sake of killing had no pleasure for them, and, indeed, was reserved for a later civilization, which sometimes boasts of its superiority and looks back condescendingly upon the rude pioneers to whom Jairus and Samuel undoubtedly belonged. For their hands were hard and horny, their clothing rough and home-made, and it is more than likely that their table manners and uncouth speech might have shocked some of the readers of this story could they have been placed, by some power, where they could have met these boys of the frontier.

But in nobility of purpose, in sturdy integrity, in the love of their mother and willingness to do their utmost for her, it is just possible that they might

have compared quite well with some of the faultless young ladies and gentlemen who are privileged to see the closing years of one century and the opening of another.

It is true there was another side to all this. The tame red deer, the pigeons, which almost seemed to wait to be caught, the fish, which in the cool of the evening leaped almost constantly from the water, were not all that could be found in the region. Bears were frequently seen, the long, lonesome howls of the wolves could be heard almost every night, and more than once the shrill, whimpering, almost human cry of the hungry panther, or "catamount," as the pioneers called the fierce beast, also could be heard. Every rose has its thorn we are told, and even the exhilaration and freedom of the pioneer life had other drawbacks than its hard work and its loneliness.

One fact, however, must not be passed over in our story. Hard as were the feelings of the widow Goodwin towards her husband's brother for his theft of her land, for so she virtually regarded it, her feeling towards his wife had been unchanged. For her, she cherished a tender regard, which even the loss of her home could not lessen, and many were the tokens of love that were sent her from her sister-in-law by the traders or the Indians as they went up the lake from St. John's, where the other family now resided.

About a month previous to this June morning,

the cousin of the boys, Arthur Goodwin, a boy of their own age, had made his way up the river and the lake in his canoe, which he had fitted out with sails. The time of his visit was near its end now, and if the truth must be told, neither of his cousins feel much regret at the thought of parting; for Arthur Goodwin had inherited many more of his father's qualities than he had of his mother's, and, in addition to all that, he was so bitter in his words against the struggling colonies, that more than once he and the boys had come well-nigh to blows in their heated debates.

Mrs. Goodwin had done all in her power to keep peace; but although they were so far from neighbors and out of the path of travel, the intense feeling of the times was not unknown in this lonely home. And Jairus and Samuel were as ardent in their feelings towards the colonies, as ever Arthur had been for the mother country and His Majesty King George III.

He had, however, brought with him a report which had sadly troubled the widow Goodwin. In the preceding autumn, General John Burgoyne had sailed for England, to lay before the king his plan for conquering the colonies. And a well-conceived plan it was too; but the planning is one thing, and executing is quite another, as many have found out long before this story was written, and sometimes to their sorrow.

Burgoyne was eager and ambitious, a fluent

talker, and as he had been engaged in the battle of Bunker Hill and in the campaign of 1776–77, he was listened to with attention, his petition was heard, and his plan approved.

And what was his plan? To divide the colonies into two parts, by gaining possession of the Hudson, and so keeping the eastern and the southern men from acting together. General Clinton was to come up the Hudson with his army from New York, and at Albany meet Burgoyne, who was to come down the lakes from Canada. A part of Burgoyne's army was to be given to St. Leger, who was to go from Montreal up the St. Lawrence river to Lake Ontario and take Oswego, and then also move on down the Mohawk valley to Albany, where he was to meet the other two generals, and if each should be successful, and not one of the three had a doubt of that, then the entire region would be brought under the control of the British, the American traders would be kept apart, and soon King George could dictate terms to all of his rebellious subjects in America.

Reports of all these plans young Arthur Goodwin had heard from his father, and he related them to his cousins with many boastings of what would soon be done.

The boys had laughed and replied with bantering words, but the widow Goodwin had been sadly troubled; for she feared there was more than idle talk in the lad's words.

If the British should attempt to carry out any such plan, it was more than likely that they would pass not far from her home. And what then? Many times she found herself wondering what the outcome would be; and as she stood in the doorway that summer morning, watching Jairus as he ran towards the shore of the lake, her thoughts were far more of the possible coming of redcoats than of the loss of the lambs, serious as that was.

The birds were twittering in the branches, and the very air seemed to be filled with their music and with the perfume of the wild flowers. The sunlight filtered through between the whispering leaves, and only peacefulness and quiet seemed to be pictured on every side. But the widow Goodwin, though she was never prone to borrow trouble, was insensible to the beauty of the June morning. Arthur's boastful words were not forgotten, and her heart was heavy with a great fear.

Two hours later the three boys entered the house together. "We've fixed the wolf-trap, mother," said Jairus, "and perhaps we can put a stop to this thieving."

"Not much use," said Arthur. "I tell you, Johnnie Burgoyne's coming down here, and you'll have to turn everything over to him, or else get out."

"He's worse than the wolves, I'll own," said Jairus angrily; "but till he comes, we'll fight the others."

There was work to be done, however, and no time for quarrelling. Just before dusk the two cows must be milked, and the calves, which thus far had escaped the wolves and bears, must be cared for.

The next morning, as soon as the early chores were done and breakfast over, the three boys started for their traps. Again their mother stood in the doorway, watching them until they disappeared from her sight in the forest.

Then, turning about, she resumed her work with a sigh, but her sigh would have been deeper could she have foreseen that many a long day was to pass before the trio would reënter her home.

CHAPTER II.

THE REFUGE IN THE BEECH-TREE.

THE sun had not been long above the horizon when the boys started on their errand. The sheep-pen was at some little distance from the house, and had been built on a sloping hillside where there was an open space in the forest, and the grass grew richer there than anywhere else about the clearing.

"I heard a howl last night that seemed to raise the hair from my head," said Jairus, as they walked on together. "I had a mind to wake you both up, and go out to see what it meant."

"Lucky you didn't," laughed Samuel. "I've no particular desire to face a pack of hungry wolves in the night. I don't feel over bold as it is."

"That's because you are younger than we are," replied Arthur. "I used to feel that way when I was your age, but I've got all over it now."

"My venerable cousin," said Samuel with a mock reverence, "I'd forgotten that both you and Jairus are a year and a half older than I am. When I am as old as you are, I shall try to recall all your words

of wisdom. It may be that I shall be as brave and bold then as you are now."

"Stop your nonsense," said Jairus. "We're close to the pen now. There, you can hear the sheep! Let's creep up without making any noise. Maybe we've got something."

"You won't get anything," growled Arthur. "You don't know how to set a wolf-trap, to say nothing of baiting it. Now the way we do at St. John's — "

"Bother you and St. John's both!" replied Jairus sharply. "Keep still, can't you? We don't want to make any more noise than is necessary."

The boys became silent, although Arthur muttered some word that sounded very like "afraid"; but they were all too eager now to heed his disagreeable manners, and in a few moments the sheep-pen came within sight, and they all ran eagerly forward into the clearing.

The trap had been set on the farther side of the pen, near the place where the wolf, on the previous night, had broken in, and in a brief time the boys ran together around the corner and approached the spot.

"There, I told you you didn't know how to set a wolf-trap. Now at St. John's we'd have — "

"Stop your noise, Arthur, and help us find the trap, will you? No wolf would have got very far away with that trap fast to one of his legs, I know," said Jairus, looking ruefully at the place where the trap had been fastened.

There had evidently been a struggle of some kind, for the chain was broken and the piece that remained showed the marks of teeth upon it.

"Must have been a gray wolf," said Samuel, "or else the chain was broken before you set the trap."

"I think the chain was all right, Sam," replied Jairus, stooping and carefully examining the link. "Well, it's gone, anyway, whatever took it away. Let's look in the pen and see if the sheep and lambs are still there. Here, I'll go in and you stay here," he added as he flung back the rude door and entered the enclosure. "They're all there, but something's frightened them," he said as he soon rejoined the boys. "They're all huddled up together, and seem almost too scared to make a noise."

"You'd have had it all right if you'd done as I told you with the trap," said Arthur. "They never fix 'em that way at St. John's, I can tell you. Up there we always know how."

"Saint Arthur, if you don't stop talking about St. John's, I'll fix a trap for you yourself," said Samuel angrily.

He might quarrel with Jairus himself, but when it came to listening to another abuse him, that was a different matter entirely, and his loyalty was at once aroused.

"Come on, boys," said Jairus; "the fellow couldn't have got far away. Let's look for him, though perhaps we shan't find anything but his bones.

They're regular cannibals, wolves are, and like nothing better than a good, fat, mutton-fed wolf for dinner, if he's hurt so badly he can't fight back. They're most as big sneaks as the Tories!"

Arthur's face flushed as he replied: "You wouldn't talk that way if you weren't two to one. I'd like to know which are the big sneaks, the men who come out squarely for the king, or those that try to dodge their honest debts? Who furnished an army to keep the bloody Frenchmen out of this very country? Who furnished the guns, and boats, and ammunition? Who kept the Frenchers out of these lands?"

"It wasn't the Frenchers that got into *our* land," said Jairus sharply.

The words were hardly spoken before Jairus regretted them. He had promised his mother that he would not make any reference to the deeds of Arthur's father; for, as she said, Arthur was not to blame for the sins of another, and she well knew how his mother sorrowed over the entire matter. Recalling all this, he was on the point of apologizing, but the expression of hatred on his cousin's face kept him silent.

"That's about the way my father says it always is with paupers," sneered Arthur. "The more you do for them, the more you may. You let them live on your land, and they pretty soon think they own it. My father would have let you stayed there where you were, only he didn't want all he'd put

into the clearing to go over to you too. He's had to work hard for what he's got. But then, he says he doesn't care. It's all you can expect from some folks."

Jairus turned sharply at the words of Arthur, and for a moment there were signs of serious trouble: but it had almost always happened whenever two of the boys had had any disagreement, the third had tried to be peacemaker.

And now Samuel broke in, and said: "Oh, come on, boys! The wolf and trap will both be gone if you don't quit this. They may be as far as St. John's now, for all I know. Perhaps he's taking the trap up there to have it properly set; or maybe it's his leg. I don't know."

The brothers laughed, but the look on Arthur's face still was one of hatred. The feeling of dislike had increased during his visit, until there was little prospect of the boys ever being friends again. The lad showed so many of the cruel and revengeful traits of his father, that Mrs. Goodwin knew the possibilities of future friendship between the cousins was very slight indeed, and she grieved the more because she knew it would be an added grief to Arthur's mother. She had watched the boys day after day, and had done all that lay within her power to keep peace between them; but the quarrels had multiplied, often growing out of very trivial matters, and this morning they had almost reached a climax near the sheep-pen.

"I'll not say another word now," said Arthur savagely. "I hate you both. I despise you and I shall never sleep another night in your house. I only came down here because my mother wanted me to. My father told me just what I might expect, for he'd had the same thing to meet himself. We wouldn't have treated you so at St. John's if you'd been there."

"Oh, hold on, Arthur," said Jairus quickly. "Don't go; it's only talk, you know."

But Arthur Goodwin turned away as if he would not listen to any further words; but he had taken only two or three steps before he suddenly stopped, and for a moment the quarrel and the bitter feelings were all forgotten.

"Gre-a-t —"

He did not complete his exclamation of surprise before both his cousins were by his side, and were gazing with him at the source of his alarm. Out from the bushes on the border of the little clearing there peered the head of a panther. His eyes were blazing with fury, and he snarled and hissed as if he were almost beside himself with rage.

For a moment not one of the boys moved or spoke. It was not the first time, by any means, that they had looked upon this terror of the frontier; but never before had they been face to face with one, and the first impulse now in the heart of each was to turn and run. But almost fascinated by the sight of the furious beast, they still stood

where they had first seen him, not even glancing at each other.

The snarling panther, apparently, was more and more enraged by the sight of the motionless boys before him. A shrill scream followed his snarls, and they could hear the heavy strokes of his tail as he lashed the bushes near him. Once or twice he turned and snapped savagely at something behind him; but when he attempted to move, it became apparent at once that he was held fast in his position.

"He's caught in the trap, boys," said Jairus in a low whisper. "That's where our trap's gone."

A sigh, as of relief, escaped from his companions, as Jairus spoke, and the boys glanced at each other for a moment. All this had happened in a very brief time, and the words of Jairus served to recall them to themselves, and to the necessity of action.

"Get your guns, boys," whispered Jairus again; for he was the only one who still retained his weapon, the others having laid theirs on the ground when they stopped to examine the broken chain of the wolf-trap. "I'll keep him covered with mine," continued Jairus, "while you get yours. He can't get away; the trap's fast in the bushes."

The first movement on the part of the boys served to increase the fury of the panther. Almost beside himself with pain and anger, he struggled to free himself, and Jairus was almost tempted to shoot. He knew, however, that the guns were

loaded only with slugs, and he was fearful that a single shot would only increase the danger, and arouse the beast still more.

He waited a moment for the boys to take their places again by his side, and then, without taking his eyes from the furious and struggling animal, he said, "Now let him have it, boys."

The report of the guns was followed by a scream that almost caused the boys to turn and run; but, retreating only behind the corner of the sheep-pen, they waited for the smoke to clear and the true condition of affairs to be revealed to them.

The panther had sent forth the one long shrill scream, and that was all. For a moment there was a thrashing about among the bushes; but that, too, soon ceased, and when the smoke had lifted, a silence rested over all. Still no one dared to venture forth, and all three hastily reloaded their guns, and waited.

The frightened sheep were bleating pitifully, but the boys were much too excited to heed them. They were all three watching the bushes to see whether the panther would free himself and spring out at them.

The minutes slowly passed, but the bleating of the sheep was all that could be heard. There was no movement within the bushes now, and when ten minutes had gone, Jairus said, "Come on, boys; he's either dead or got away."

Slowly and carefully the boys approached the

place where their enemy had been; but still no sign of danger appeared. Holding their guns in readiness, they drew nearer and nearer, and at last were close to the place in which they had seen the savage beast. "There, he's dead," said Arthur quickly, as he caught a glimpse of a tawny body within the bushes.

Taking a long branch, he thrust it within, and slightly moved the body. As no response was made, the boys, satisfied that their enemy was dead, laid hold upon the broken chain, and with one strong pull drew forth the dead body of the panther.

Even then, when it lay stretched out motionless before them, their fears had not all ceased. What a savage-looking creature he was, even in death. The long claws, the half-closed eyes, the great jaws and teeth, were still there, though life was gone; and for a moment no one spoke.

But the feeling of exultation soon prevailed, and they opened the jaws of the great trap which had shut together upon one of the legs of the panther and been the cause of his ill-fortune.

"There, he'll not kill any more of our lambs," said Samuel.

"Up in St. John's they say they always hunt in pairs," said Arthur. "Maybe this fellow's mate is not far away."

"That's so, Sam," said Jairus quickly. "She may be eying us this very minute."

The way in which all three of the boys picked up their guns and glanced swiftly about them was almost laughable; but no signs of the mate could be seen, and they soon regained their composure.

"She'll be here, though; you mark my words," continued Arthur; "and you'd better get ready to meet her."

"Sam, you go up to the house and get some of those big bullets. We don't want these slugs. They worked once, but the next panther won't come with a trap fast to one leg," said Jairus.

His brother quickly started for the house, and Jairus and Arthur began to prepare a hiding-place in one of the beech-trees, which stood on the border of the clearing. Jairus climbed the tree and Arthur tossed up to him some broken branches and two or three boards, which were all that could be found near the sheep-pen.

Jairus worked steadily, and by the time Samuel returned with the bullets, he had constructed a platform high up in the beech-tree strong enough to bear the combined weight of the three boys, and which would provide a place from which they could watch all that occurred beneath them, without, as they thought, being seen themselves.

The guns and ammunition were next passed up, and then, giving one hasty glance about him, Samuel prepared to join the boys in the tree and wait for the coming of the dead panther's mate.

CHAPTER III.

THE MEETING BY THE BEECH-TREE.

The boys soon took their positions on the rude platform they had constructed, and prepared to await the possible coming of the new enemy. The excitement of their recent encounter soon passed, and when an hour had gone they began to grow weary of the task.

The platform was well up in the tree; far enough, as they thought, to protect them from attacks from below, and yet they could see for some distance not merely over the clearing, but out into the forest as well.

The June sun climbed higher in the heavens. The songs of the birds had lost some of the volume which had been poured forth when the dew still rested on the grass. There was the promise of a warm day, and both Jairus and Samuel began to chafe over the enforced idleness; for there were pressing duties to be done even in that wilderness home, and pleasant June mornings were not so plentiful as to warrant any neglect on the part of the young pioneers.

Apparently the recent quarrel had been forgotten or ignored, for no reference was made to it after the boys had taken their seats on the platform in the tree. Arthur's face still bore traces of his anger, but neither of his cousins heeded him, at least so far as appearances went.

The guns had now been loaded with the larger bullets, and the boys had been keeping careful watch on all sides of the clearing. The sheep were still bleating, as if they could not understand why they should be shut in the pen on such a morning as this, when tempting grass and fresh green leaves were to be found on every side. Neither Jairus nor his brother, however, had heeded them, and indeed had been glad of their plaintive calls; for they might serve as a means of drawing any prowling beast within hearing and perhaps within the range of the muskets of the waiting boys.

"What's the use of staying cooped up here any longer?" said Samuel at last, impatiently breaking in upon the silence. "No panther's coming here to-day, and besides, if one did come, it isn't very far from the ground up to this platform. The catamount might turn hunter and we be the hunted if she wanted to turn things about."

"That's the way some people feel about everything," said Arthur with a sneer.

"When Tories are up a tree, they talk very bold," replied Samuel angrily. "I'm no more afraid than you are. I'll wait here just as long as you do."

Silence followed, and the threatenings of a renewal of the quarrel ceased for a time. Another hour passed, and even Jairus was beginning to feel that the watch was becoming a useless one. The sheep had become more quiet, as if they had ceased to expect relief and freedom. The songs of the birds were almost entirely hushed now, and the silence of the great forest rested oppressively over all.

"I think we'll have to give it up for this day," said Jairus at last. "We've been here more than two hours now and haven't seen a sign of a catamount. I guess if the mate had been anywhere within hearing of the calls of this fellow when he felt that trap shut together on his leg, she'd have shown up before this."

"I'm with you," said Samuel, attempting to rise as he spoke. "I feel as if my legs had been held in a trap, too. I can hardly move a muscle."

"Hold on. Don't go yet," said Arthur in a low whisper. "There's something over there in the bushes," and he pointed as he spoke to a cluster on the further side of the clearing.

His words were hardly spoken when the bushes suddenly parted, and with a light bound a panther leaped into the open place. Breathlessly the boys watched her, and so intent were they upon her movements that not a whisper passed between them.

For a brief time the great beast stood silent, glar-

ing sharply all about her; but in a moment her glance fell upon her dead mate, whose body the boys had left exposed and lying on the ground, not far from the tree in which they had constructed their platform.

Two quick bounds brought her to the body, and she began to sniff as she walked slowly about it. If other feelings had been in the boys' hearts, perhaps they would have been moved by the sight of her grief which followed.

Uttering a low whine or moan, she began to lick the wounds of her mate, caressing his body as if she would try by some means to call him back to life again. For several minutes her labors continued, the boys meanwhile watching her with breathless interest, either being too interested or too excited to take advantage of the opportunity for a shot which was presented.

Suddenly, however, a change came. Apparently satisfied that her companion was dead, the panther's feelings and actions quickly changed. An impulse of intense rage seemed to seize her. Standing with her fore feet on the body, and crouching low, she sent forth a scream of fury that almost made Samuel let go his hold upon his gun. She lashed her sides with her tail, her eyes meanwhile glowing like burning coals, and the lips were drawn back from her jaws, disclosing the terrible fangs which doubtless had wrought destruction on many a helpless victim. Her ears were flat against her head,

and growls and snarls, and whining cries, and what seemed to be shrieks of rage were all mingled. None of the boys had ever before looked upon a picture of such uncontrolled fury as the panther, robbed of her mate, presented.

Not a sound had come from the sheep-pen; but suddenly the furious beast leaped from her position, and darted towards the enclosure. She could peer in between the logs, and what she saw seemed to add to her rage. Around and around the pen she ran, now stopping to claw furiously into the logs, as if she would tear them apart, and now digging with her claws at the soil upon which they rested.

The frightened sheep uttered no sound; but the boys could see that they were huddled together, and were darting swiftly from one side of the pen to the other, striving to keep as far away from the savage beast as possible.

"Jairus, shan't we shoot? What are you waiting for?" tremblingly whispered Samuel.

"Hush, Sam," whispered Jairus in reply. "We might hit one of the sheep or lambs, and as we've only seven left, we don't want to do that. She'll come out into the clearing again, and when she does we'll give it to her. Keep your guns ready, and when I whisper the word, let her have it all together."

Arthur had said nothing; but after the first excitement over the approach of the panther had passed, there had been a sneer on his face when he

glanced at the boys, which Jairus clearly understood as implying that they were afraid to shoot. But the boy understood himself, and was waiting for the proper time to come.

"I'm going to shoot if you are afraid," said Arthur. "I'm not afraid of hitting the sheep. I think it's the catamount that scares you, not the little lambs."

"Arthur Goodwin, if you shoot before I give the word, I'll shove you off from the platform."

Jairus was angry as well as excited now, and for a moment the two boys glared at each other, as if both had forgotten the presence of their common enemy.

As they glanced again at the panther, they saw that a sudden change had come over her. Had she overheard them speaking? Her head was lifted and she was sniffing at the air.

Suddenly, and without a moment's warning, she uttered a low whine, and before the boys realized what she was doing, she gave two great bounds and disappeared in the forest.

"Well, you've done it now!" said Jairus angrily. "She heard your voice and has got away. Fine trick that! and now she'll be prowling around here, and in a week we won't have a sheep or critter left on the place."

"It's your own fault," muttered Arthur. "If you hadn't been so afraid, I could have hit her alone. You've no one to blame but yourself. But then

that's a trick some folks have; they take what doesn't belong to them, and what's their own they're mighty glad to shove off on some one else. I'm going to get out of this and start for St. John's right away. I've had all I want of two such fellows as you."

The brothers were almost too angry to reply, and entered no protest. Picking up their guns again, they prepared to go down the tree, and Arthur, who was in advance, had already stepped off from the platform and grasped one of the limbs with his hand, when a startled exclamation from Samuel recalled him.

"Look there, boys! That's what scared off the catamount!"

A hasty glance in the direction indicated by the frightened lad caused both the others to share in his feelings; for out from the forest three or four Indians could be seen stealthily approaching. They were armed with guns, and on their shoulders were slung also some bows and quivers filled with arrows.

As they entered the clearing, the sight of the dead panther attracted their attention. Assembling about it, they carefully examined it, and then standing up again, glanced about them in every direction.

The frightened boys drew back against the tree, fearful that their own presence might be detected; and if the presence of the catamount had frightened them, the sight now before them was far worse.

The Indians were painted hideously, and it was evident that they were on the war-path. Would

they discover the hiding-place of the boys? The lads glanced at one another, and the peril of their situation, they could all three see, was fully appreciated.

Suddenly Jairus felt his brother lightly touch his arm and point once more towards the forest. It appeared to be almost alive with Indians. From behind every tree and bush they seemed to come, and at a low call from one of the warriors standing beneath the tree, the newcomers joined those who were in the enclosure.

Still they came. Silently they joined their companions, and not a word was spoken, though many curious glances were cast at the dead body of the panther. Two hundred, three hundred, four hundred, must be there now, thought Jairus, his heart beating rapidly with a great fear not only for himself and his companions, but also for his mother, who perhaps might come from the house at any time now to discover the cause of the prolonged absence of the boys.

And all of the Indians were as hideously painted as were those who had first appeared. Jairus recalled the rumors which had reached the lonely home of the plans of Burgoyne and the Indians, and for the first time he realized that there was some truth in them; for he had at once associated their presence with the threatenings of the British.

But he was too much fascinated by the sight beneath him to think of anything else at the time.

He had been watching the coming of the warriors from the forest, and had not taken his eyes from the place, save occasionally as he glanced at the crowd below.

He noticed also a priest and two or three white men clad in the uniform of the British, and as they joined their companions he judged that it had been for their arrival the others had been waiting.

As they approached, one of the Indians, who he concluded must be a chief, advanced and a hurried consultation followed between him and one of the white men. Jairus could not hear any of the words, but from the gestures of the chief as he pointed towards the sheep-pen, he concluded that he was suggesting that the sheep should be taken.

Hardly realizing that the loss was his, he watched the men as some of them hurriedly obeyed the word of one of the officers, and in a few moments every sheep had been slaughtered and arrangements made to carry the bodies with them on their march.

The great fear in Jairus's heart now was that the hiding-place might be discovered or that some would go up to the house where his mother was. He shuddered as he thought of what might then occur.

Meanwhile the other boys were clinging close to the tree, though all three were so fascinated by the sight below them that they could not turn away from it. No noise had been made by any of the

Indians. They had moved as silently as the leaves of the trees bow before the wind, but their hideous appearance and the presence of the British officers showed only too clearly the object on which they were bent.

Another brief consultation between the chief and the officers followed, after the slaughter of the sheep, the men standing during the conversation directly beneath the beech-tree in which the boys were concealed. The conference did not last long, however, and it was with a great sigh of relief that Jairus saw the scouts start off into the forest again and the warriors prepare to follow.

More than half the assembly had gone when Jairus turned to look at his companions. The end would soon be here now, and they would be free again; but as he turned, his foot pushed against one of the branches which composed the little platform on which they were standing, and, falling from its place, it struck the ground at the feet of the officer who was standing near.

In surprise, both he and the chief glanced upward, and with a great sinking of the heart Jairus realized that their hiding-place had been discovered.

"Here, you! Come down out of that tree!" called the officer.

"Don't you go, Sam. Climb higher up and keep still. Maybe they won't suspect you," whispered Jairus as he and Arthur hastily obeyed the summons and quickly descended to the ground.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONFERENCE.

"I HEAR that lots of the Tories have joined Burgoyne on his march, but I never expected to see it rain Tories. Where did you come from, and what were you doing up in that tree?" said the astonished officer, as he looked at the boys who had appeared so unexpectedly that he had at first stepped back to be out of their way.

"We were hiding there, waiting for that panther's mate to come," replied Jairus, pointing to the dead body, which had attracted the attention of the leaders and caused the advancing warriors to halt. "She came here just a few minutes ago and we were just going to shoot, when the Indians came up."

Jairus spoke calmly, but his heart was beating violently, and he was oppressed by a great fear. Samuel was still in the tree and his mother not far away, and the possibilities of harm to them as well as to himself were neither few nor small.

"We're glad you've come," said Arthur, "and we'll go with you. My father's John Goodwin,

and he lives up at St. John's. Come on down out of that tree, Sam!" he added, looking upward for a moment, and then glancing wickedly at Jairus.

"What! Are there more of you?" said the officer hastily. "Then come down out of that," he added, looking upward as he spoke.

For a moment there was a silence in the tree, and then the branches parted and Samuel, looking very crestfallen, slid down the trunk and joined them.

"Why didn't you come with the others?" said the officer sternly.

"I didn't know just who you were," stammered Samuel. "I came just as soon as you called me."

He glanced at his brother as he spoke, and he knew at once by the expression on his face that he was greatly alarmed, and he resolved for his own part to use the fewest possible words.

"It's all right as long as you came," replied the officer. "Now tell me truly whether there is anybody else hiding in any of the trees around here."

"Not another soul," replied Arthur quickly. "We're the only ones here, and I've told you just exactly the truth. My father's John Goodwin, and he lives up at St. John's."

"Yes, I've heard of him," said the officer dryly, and for a moment hope returned to the heart of Jairus as he thought he recognized a look of disgust on his face as he spoke. "Then you are his boy, are you?" said the officer. "And these may be your brothers?"

"Not brothers, but cousins," replied Arthur. "Their name is Goodwin too. They aren't quite as strong Tories as I am, but I guess they'll go along with you, if you want them." He turned to Jairus as he spoke, and smiled malignantly.

For a moment it was in Jairus's mind to declare just who he was, but the recollection of the great body of Indians which still was near, the excitement through which they had just passed, and above all the fear of what might follow the declaration of their true position kept him silent, and an appealing glance from his younger brother strengthened his determination not to speak.

In a moment he realized that if he should wish to, it was too late, as he heard the officer say: "They'll be stronger Tories before we're done with 'em, I dare say. Now we can't stay here and waste any more time. We'll have to hasten as it is, or the meeting will have taken place and the general will have taken Ty and the whole region. Come — we'll start," and he motioned to the boys to advance.

"What! Have we got to go with you too?" said Jairus, aghast.

"That's what I said. Come, don't stop to parley here. We're late now."

"But we can't leave our mother this way," pleaded Samuel. "If we have to go, let us go first and tell her. She won't know what's become of us if we don't. We can catch up with you in a little while."

"She'll have to find out as best she can what's become of her boys," replied the officer. "She isn't the only one who's had to do it. Come on!"

"But can't some one go up to the house with us? It won't take but a few minutes, and we'll come straight back. Only just to tell her—"

"March on, there!" said the officer sharply. "We'll have no more of this nonsense. I shall begin to think pretty soon you don't care much about joining us, if you don't keep still."

Jairus gave his brother a quick glance, and both boys turned and without a further word of protest started with the little company and soon were well on their way in the forest. But there was a strange conflict going on in the mind of Jairus. There were moments when he was tempted to declare boldly just where he and his brother stood. Their isolated position, and the fact that news from the world outside seldom came to their lonely home, had kept them largely ignorant of the movements of the times. Occasionally rumors came, when some hunter reported what he had heard was going on at Albany or Montreal, or the infrequent visitors from across the lake had brought some little information. That the summer promised to be a stirring one they had somehow felt rather than known, but of the preparations already made, they knew almost nothing.

Perhaps it was just as well, thought Jairus, as they marched on in silence, that their captor, for he

could regard him in no other light, should have the impression that they were Tories, although only half-hearted ones. With that understanding, it might be possible that some means of escape could soon be found, and the brave-hearted lad had not gone far before a strong determination had manifested itself on his countenance, and in such a manner that his brother knew at once a change of some kind had come.

Still not a word was spoken. The three Indians and the white men who had remained with Captain Black, for that was the leader's name, they soon learned, were in advance, and the officer brought up the rear. They had no difficulty in making their way or discovering the path which those who had gone before them had used.

Occasionally Jairus or Samuel turned and glanced at their cousin, but the calm, cruel, satisfied smile on his face angered them more than any words of his could have done. How he appeared to enjoy their predicament! He knew it was too late for them to explain their true position, and on the other hand he had already committed them to the British. And they had not denied it when he had spoken.

Jairus almost ground his teeth in his rage as he felt his helplessness. All his feelings toward the British invaders had been intensified within the past hour, as they had not been in all his previous life. He would not fight. He would get away somehow.

He would see that his treacherous cousin reaped a suitable reward for his cruelty. How could he have been so unmindful of their mother after all she had done for him in the stay of a month he had made in her home! What a return for her hospitality! His father had taken advantage of their weakness in their time of grief, but the son had done far more.

What was the loss of their home across the lake compared with this sorrow which Arthur Goodwin had brought upon their mother! Already Jairus could picture her in his mind as the evening drew near and the boys did not return. The darkness would soon deepen, and still they would not come, and he almost groaned aloud as he thought of her searching for them in the night. And she had known they had started forth in search of the dead panther's mate. Perhaps the mate would again return, and his mother —

Again he thought of the prowling Indians. Captain Black had not told him whether others were to follow them or not, but he was well assured in his own mind that they would, and if those who were in advance of them had discovered the sheep-pen, it would be only natural to fancy that those who might be following would discover their home.

Almost frantic, Jairus turned and glanced again at Arthur; but the self-satisfied expression was still on his cousin's face, and in sheer desperation he turned away for fear he would say or do something

which would increase the danger in which they found themselves. No, he must be careful now if ever he was to be, and every hope of his escaping or returning to his mother depended upon his self-control.

So, silently, the little party trudged on in that beautiful day in early June, 1777, and when less than two hours had elapsed the captain suddenly halted and said: "Here's the Bouquet, and we can't be far from the place where we were to meet. Ah, there it is now!" and he pointed eagerly ahead as he spoke.

In the distance Jairus could see that a great crowd had assembled, and as they drew nearer he saw that the Indians had arranged themselves in a semicircle, and that one of the British officers was advancing within it with outstretched hands and arms. Behind him lay a great assembly of redcoats, and the boys could see that among them were many stragglers and Indians.

"That's General Burgoyne himself," said Captain Black excitedly to his white companion. "He's talking to them. Let us stop here and listen."

For a moment Jairus forgot his own grief and anxiety in his interest in the scene before him. The summer day, the sloping hillside, the strange assembly, and the presence of the great general of whom he had heard so much, all combined to fasten his attention on the present scene.

General Burgoyne advanced, and, when he was

farther within the circle, began to speak. Jairus thought his face not an unpleasant one, though his manner was very condescending and pompous; but he soon forgot all this as he listened to his speech and watched the Indians as they followed the words of the speaker.

He told them of the clemency of the king, which the colonies had sadly abused, as he declared. He assured the dusky warriors that they were known to be brave and desperate foes, and that all of his followers would strive to imitate their example. "Go forth," said he, "in the might of your valor and your cause! Strike at the common enemies of Great Britain and of America; disturbers of public order, peace, and happiness; destroyers of commerce; parricides of the state. However, I positively forbid bloodshed when you are not opposed in arms. Aged men, women, and children and prisoners must be held sacred from the knife and hatchet, even in the time of actual conflict. You shall receive compensation for the prisoners you take, but you shall be called to account for scalps. In conformity and indulgence of your customs, which have affixed an idea of honor to such badges of victory, you shall be allowed to take the scalps of the dead when killed by your fire and in fair opposition; but on no account or pretence, or subtilty, or prevarication are they to be taken from the wounded or even from the dying; and still less pardonable, if possible, will it be held to kill men in that condition on purpose,

and upon a supposition that this protection to the wounded would be thereby evaded."

The warriors listened attentively to the words of General Burgoyne, and appeared to understand. Jairus did not know that Burgoyne himself had been bitterly opposed to employing the Indians in any way; but that his advice and scruples had been overruled by the English ministers, and that he was only obeying their orders in permitting them to be enrolled in his army.

Jairus's attention was drawn, however, to an aged Iroquois chief, who advanced slowly and, in reply to Burgoyne's speech, said: "I stand up in the name of all the nations present to assure our father that we have attentively listened to his discourse. We receive you as our father, because when you speak we hear the voice of our great father beyond the great lake. We rejoice in the approbation you have expressed of our behavior. We have been tried and tempted by the Bostonians (the truth was that only General Gage and his emissaries had tried to tempt them), but we loved our father, and our hatchets have been sharpened upon our affections. In proof of the sincerity of our professions, our whole villages, able to go to war, are come forth. The old and infirm, our infants and wives, alone remain at home. With one common consent we promise a constant obedience to all you have ordered and to all you shall order; and may the Father of Days give you many victories and great success."

The chief ceased, and the pleased expression upon Burgoyne's face led Arthur to say to the boys: "There, you see what the general wants! Nothing could be fairer than that, I'm sure. I hope you'll remember it for two or three weeks till the war's over, and then report what you've heard the general himself say."

Neither of the boys made any reply. Not only did they not believe the red men could be trusted, but they could not trust themselves to speak to their traitorous cousin. All their hope of safety and escape depended upon their discretion now.

An Indian war-dance followed the conference, and as they watched the Indians flourishing their tomahawks and knives, going through the imaginary processes of killing and scalping their enemies, brandishing the trophies aloft, all the time keeping in constant motion and giving the blood-curdling whoops, they saw that the British general looked benignantly on, all unsuspicious that these ferocious men would not abide by their fair promises, or obey the commands he had given in his address.

"We're on the march again now," said Captain Black to them at last. "You go with this man and he'll assign you places; for I take it you'll not object to going with us a little while?" and he looked sharply at them as he spoke.

"Not in the least. That's the very thing we want to do," said Arthur eagerly.

"Very well then. David Jones will fix you out."

The army was already in motion, and with trembling hearts Jairus and Samuel followed their cousin and the soldier, as they turned from the place where they had been standing.

CHAPTER V.

JAIRUS ACTS.

Our boys soon found that the march was not to be a long one, and the detachment soon joined the main body of Burgoyne's army, which had halted near by for the purpose of awaiting the coming of the Indian bands. Four hundred of the red men were already among the followers of the British general, and the addition of those who had been led by Captain Black increased the number to almost a thousand.

It was an impressive sight upon which our boys looked when they arrived at the place where the main army lay. The Indians in their war-paint and feathers, the glittering uniforms of the officers, the presence of Tories and irregulars, who had come to the camp in large numbers, all combined to make the newcomers sadly disheartened.

Jairus and Samuel looked at each other sadly as the vast army spread out before them, and they saw its hope and spirit, the confidence of the leaders, and the superb equipment of all the forces.

For the night they were assigned to the tent

which David Jones occupied. What had become of Arthur, they did not know. He had departed soon after their arrival, and had not returned. Their thoughts, however, were mostly of their mother, and as they pictured her grief at their failure to return, they became more and more depressed.

"What's the trouble, boys?" said David heartily as he entered the tent. "You look as glum as owls."

"We're troubled a little about our mother. She's a widow and we had to leave her all alone," replied Jairus. He was endeavoring to speak as hopefully as possible; for he was determined to seize the first opportunity to escape, and well knew that he must allay all their suspicions of himself and of his brother.

"Oh, well, that's hard; no doubt about that," replied David. "I've had to leave some of my best friends behind me. Not my mother, though," and he laughed lightly as he spoke. "But it won't be long. Why, Burgoyne must have close on to ten thousand men under him, and the colonies won't stand long before him. He's got some of the best-trained men in the world here, and he's counting on five hundred or more of the Tories joining him from across the lake. They're good fighters, you know."

"Do they know down at Fort Ty that we're on our way towards them?" inquired Jairus.

"I hope not," laughed David. "It's not so great a matter if they do, though; for it'll only put off the end a little. It can't stop it. They may fight a bit at the fort, but we're bound to take it. Can't be otherwise, you see; and then when they hear that St. Leger is coming down the Mohawk, and Sir Henry and Lord Howe are coming up the Hudson, it'll be all day with them. We'll split 'em open, just the way they used to open oysters down on the shore of Long Island Sound. We'll take the oysters and throw away the shells. It's hard to leave your mother alone, though, boys, I'll not deny that; but she isn't the only woman that has to shift for herself now. But they'll all forget it in a minute, when they see us coming home in a few days, and the thing all done. And I'm going to have a home of my own, boys, then, — I don't mind telling you; so you see that I'm just as much in a hurry for the thing to be over, as ever you two can be."

David spoke lightly, and it was evident that he had no suspicions of the boys.

"What'll we have to do?" asked Samuel. "Do you suppose we can stop anywhere, or get word to mother?"

"Oh, I make no doubt you'll be assigned to Fraser's corps in the morning. You know General Fraser has command of the loyalists and the Indians, Phillips has about all the artillery, and Baron de Riedesel has the Hessians. You'll know

all about it soon enough, but I make no doubt you'll be put with Fraser's men. They are the fellows that are used to go ahead and clear the way, and find out what the other chaps are up to. Fraser's the best man in the army, next to John Burgoyne."

"I hope we'll be with him, then," said Jairus decidedly, giving his brother a glance full of meaning as he spoke. "That's the kind of work we can do best. Do you know what's become of Arthur? That's the other fellow who was with us when we joined the army."

"No. I'd forgotten there was another one with you. You'll find him in the morning. I've got to go on duty to-night, so you'll have to keep this tent to yourselves. Think you can do it?"

"We'll try it," responded Samuel quickly, almost too quickly, his brother thought; for he added, "I hope you won't be gone all night. When'll you come back?"

"Twelve o'clock. But I'm off now, so good night to you. Your mother's all right, I know."

For a long time the boys in low tones talked over their situation when they were left to themselves. To attempt to steal out of the camp that night was useless, for guards had been stationed on every side. Arthur's disappearance troubled them, but at last they stretched themselves on the ground to take such rest as they could get, after having decided that their best and only safe

course was to wait for the coming of the morning, and be ready to take advantage of the first opportunity that presented itself.

It was broad daylight when their companion aroused them. "Come, boys, it's time to turn out! It's all fixed, and you've been assigned to Fraser's corps; just as I thought you'd be. You'll see some fun pretty soon."

"What, are we going to start to-day for Fort Ty?" said Jairus.

"No, not quite that. We've got to hang about here a bit. The general's going to wait for more of the loyalists to join him. It seems there's a lot of 'em coming from the other side of the lake. I guess it won't be long before you can't find a Whig on the shores of either lake. The sooner, the better for us all, say I."

"Then you don't think the Yankees will fight much?" asked Jairus quietly.

"Oh, they'll fight some. I make no doubt of that; but what can they do against the artillery and the regulars? And then, they haven't any such men here as John Burgoyne is. He's promised to look after all who will come over to the king's side now, and give them his protection, no matter who, or what, they were before."

"That's good of him," said Samuel quietly. "I wonder if he got all the Indians here to help him see that his words were carried out?"

"Oh, he thinks he'll keep the redskins safe

enough," said David confidently, and all unaware of the feeling implied in Samuel's words. "If there should be much fighting, why they might make trouble; but as it is, you know, why the sight of the great army will be enough to bring every Whig to his knees. Do you know, I shouldn't be surprised if Fort Ty gave up without a peep. So, you see, there'll be no trouble with the redskins."

A few weeks later Samuel thought of these words of David, when before his face there was flourished a dark and glossy scalp, the sight of which drove the color from his face and filled his heart with an anguish which never found relief. But at the time, all were in ignorance of the coming events, and the strong confidence of David was not without a marked effect on both his hearers.

They did their best, however, to keep up an appearance of interest, and when David turned to go and said: "By the way, Jairus, you are to go with Wyandot Panther and me across the lake this morning," Jairus replied, "I'm ready to go. How long will it be before we start?"

"I'll be back for you in an hour or two; so don't go far away."

"What are we going for?"

"Oh, it's some message, I believe, for a man on the other shore. He's a good loyalist and the general knows he can depend on him. He's to make a

report, or some such thing, about the forces of the loyalists who are gathering there."

"I'll wait for you," said Jairus, as David left the tent.

Neither of the boys left the tent before David returned. They talked in low tones and tried to find some possible way out of their troubles, but none presented itself.

"No, Sam," said Jairus at last. "We'll just have to keep our eyes open and do our best. If we get separated, then each one will have to look after himself. Arthur Goodwin's the one I'm most afraid of, for he can raise the mischief with us. We're all right now, or at least thus far; for we've let his words stand just as he gave them. He thinks he's trapped us into joining Burgoyne's army; so we'll let him think so for a while. But just let him look out. That's all I've got to say."

"Here's David," said Samuel, as their companion entered the tent. "All ready?"

"Yes, we're all ready. Come on, Jairus. Next time you can go, Sam, but this time the canoe won't hold but three, and the Panther's going to paddle. Come, Jairus; he's waiting now down on the shore. We won't be gone over night," he added, as he and Jairus left the tent and started towards the lake.

Wyandot Panther was waiting for them, and in a moment they had taken their places in the light canoe. The guns were placed carefully in the bottom, and as each was thoroughly at home in the use

of a canoe, they had no difficulty in maintaining their places as the Indian sent the little craft forward by his long and steady sweeps of the paddle.

For a time they sped on in silence. Jairus watched the muscular savage as he skilfully swept the water. He was a tall and powerful Indian, and one for whom Jairus knew he would be no match in an encounter. His face was almost expressionless, and, save for an occasional gleam from his dark eyes as he glanced quickly out over the lake, would not have betrayed any of his feelings.

No one spoke. The guns lay temptingly near him, and more than once Jairus was almost ready to grasp one and strive to make his escape. But what could he do? To swim ashore was impossible from where they were, and if he should overturn the canoe, it might only result in the death of all three. No, his only hope lay in waiting for aid, or for a favorable opportunity on shore; but when he thought of the object of their voyage, his heart sank. What could he hope for?

Meanwhile, the canoe sped on and on, the Indian being apparently tireless in his efforts. As steadily as if he had been a machine he kept the paddle moving and held the canoe to its course.

But at last the shore became more distinct. The outlines of trees and rocks could be seen, and in a brief time the canoe was drawn up on the beach by the three men, and they leaped lightly ashore.

"Now, Jairus, you and the Panther wait for me

here. I'll not be gone long, and I'll know just what to do when I come back."

The Indian made no reply, and Jairus soon followed his example and seated himself to await the return of their companion. But his thoughts became more and more bitter. There he was, apparently aiding the king's side. The canoe looked up at him temptingly. His gun was on the ground by his side, and yet he did not dare to use it. He knew not how many men might be near. Perhaps even now they were watching him.

He glanced behind him at the thought, but the monotonous outline of the forest was unbroken. The sighing of the trees, the ripples on the shore, the songs of the birds were there, but that was all. And yet freedom was so near, if only he could gain it!

A low exclamation from his companion caused him to look up, just as David returned and said: "I've got to see two more men, and I'll have to go down the shore a piece. I'm going through the woods, and want you to take the canoe and paddle down to the point." He gave some minute instructions to the Panther, and then turned quickly again and disappeared from sight.

To his offer to paddle, the Indian made no response, and accordingly Jairus took his place in the canoe once more. The Panther's strokes were even swifter and more powerful than before. His appearance was hideous, and when Jairus thought

of the name by which he had heard him called, — "Wyandot Panther," — he knew that it must be characteristic of the warrior. What a dangerous enemy he would be! Jairus was no stripling, but he knew he would be helpless if once he were within the grasp of the powerful warrior before him.

The Panther held the canoe well inshore now, and the steady strokes would soon bring them to the point they were seeking.

Thoughts of his mother and her danger, of the garrison at Fort Ticonderoga, and how that probably they were all unsuspicious of the impending peril flashed through Jairus's mind. And yet he was assisting the enemy!

Almost desperate, he glanced again at the Indian before him. He was on his knees now and his back was toward Jairus. How he hated the sight of him! How he would like to throw him into the lake!

Suddenly a new impulse seized him. In his desperation he determined to make one effort to escape. The gun was near his feet, and without changing his position he reached forward and slowly drew it to him. He knew not who might be watching him from the shore, but he did know that the sound of a shot might bring about him a multitude of enemies, and escape would then be an impossibility.

The gun was in his hands now, and the Panther had not turned. For several minutes more the canoe sped on, the Indian working silently and

steadily, and still Jairus hesitated. Should he shoot?

Suddenly the Indian uttered a low exclamation and slightly changed the course of the canoe. It was then or never that Jairus must act, and after hesitating but a moment he said in a low voice: "No, no. Keep on up the lake."

The Panther turned quickly at the word, and the desperate lad as quickly brought the old flint-lock to his shoulder.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE WATER.

For a moment the two men were motionless. Jairus felt, rather than saw, that the eyes of the Panther were glittering as they gazed at him, but the open muzzle of even an old flint-lock is a very effectual check upon active demonstrations. Jairus, seated in the stern, held the gun steadily to his shoulder, and the Indian merely dropped the paddle which he had lifted from the water at the unexpected summons, and, without moving a muscle, gazed at the young man in front of him.

The strain was intense, and Jairus knew that his own heart was beating rapidly. In his momentary desperation he had spoken the word, but now that his summons was heeded he hardly knew what to do. To shoot might arouse the waiting men on the shore, for he was satisfied from David's words that "the irregulars" were assembling, and, doubtless, at any moment might appear in large numbers to cross the lake to join Burgoyne. And, besides, there was the horror of taking a human life, even that of a painted savage who would not hesitate a

moment to take his if the advantage were on his side.

How the affair might have terminated if the outcome had been left to him, he never knew, but it was settled a moment later when, with a yell that almost made him drop his gun, the Panther, with a sudden leap, sprang into the water and overturned the canoe.

Jairus pressed his finger on the trigger and the sharp report of his gun rang out; but his aim had been destroyed by the sudden movement of the Indian, and in a moment he found himself in the water. The gun sank in the lake, and he felt himself going down.

By a desperate effort he rose quickly to the surface, and as soon as his head was above the water he saw what the purpose of the Panther was. Evidently the canoe had floated farther from him than he had counted upon, but he was swimming with desperate strokes towards the little craft.

It was a few yards nearer Jairus, however, and the lad struck out for it with lusty strokes. He had moccasins on his feet, as the Indian had, and his clothing was but a slight encumbrance. He realized at once that it was a desperate race, and that whoever should be the first to gain the canoe would probably save his own life, while the loser in the race might forfeit his.

Jairus was an expert swimmer and for years had had practice in the art; for at the close of the

summer days, he and Samuel had been accustomed to seek a sheltered spot by the lake side, and swim and dive in the cool water; and all he had gained stood him in good stead now.

Swift swimmer as he was, however, the Indian was as swift as he. Jairus could see the water almost boil as the muscular savage forced his way onward. Each swimmer realized the necessity of doing his utmost, and Jairus put forth all the strength he could summon. Important as the race was, the end would come in a minute, and the eager lad almost shouted as he saw that he was the first to arrive at the canoe.

There was no time in which to turn, or try to crawl into the canoe, and he therefore gave it one quick, hard push and sent it yards ahead of both of them.

Again the race was resumed, and the swimmers were not far apart now. The struggle became even more desperate than before. The still waters of the lake were rolled back in waves as they plunged onward. Their breath came in quick, hard gasps, and each could hear the heavy breathing of the other. Still, neither turned to glance behind him, the one aim of each now being to gain the canoe before the other.

Jairus felt rather than saw that he was gaining slightly. The efforts he was putting forth, however, could not long be continued. If the issue of the race became a question of endurance, he was

well aware what the outcome would be. What he was to do, he must do quickly, and once more shutting his teeth tightly together, and hardly breathing under the great strain, he strove to increase his efforts.

Again he was the first to gain the canoe, but once more he saw that before he could clamber in the Indian would be upon him, and, besides, there was little likelihood that he could keep the light craft from capsizing; and again he gave the boat a hard push and sent it far ahead of them.

There was a desperate thought in his mind now of turning and entering into a contest with the Indian in the water, where he thought he might not be at such a disadvantage as he would be on shore; but one hasty glance at the savage face behind him, rendered more hideous now by the effect of the water on his war-paint, was sufficient, and he turned and again began his desperate struggle to be once more the first to gain the canoe.

His heart almost stood still when he looked at the canoe and perceived that his last effort had sent it straight upon the shore of a little island near by. The island was only a rock which jutted out of the water, and he could see that it was surrounded by a shoal; but he knew now that if he gained the boat first, the end of the struggle had come. If he should fail, the advantage would all then be with his enemy, and although he was beginning to feel the effect of his fearful contest, he

again increased his efforts and swam on even more swiftly than before. He was aware that the Panther knew as well as he that the end was at hand, and that he, too, had increased his speed.

Once more Jairus realized that he was gaining, though his lead was not great enough to furnish much comfort. Moment after moment passed, and still the desperate lad struggled on.

He was the first to gain the shoal, which, he perceived as soon as his feet touched bottom, did not gradually taper into the lake, but came to a sudden end.

Struggling, stumbling, almost falling, hardly able to draw his breath, he somehow rushed forward and his hand rested on the edge of the canoe. With one desperate effort he threw himself into it and felt that the impetus he had given it had sent it farther out into the lake, and that now it was free from the shore.

He gained his balance as he rose to his feet, and as he turned to use the paddle which he had hastily seized, for somehow the canoe had quickly righted itself after he and the Indian had left it, he saw the head of the Panther within two feet of the stern. In a moment his hand would be on it and then the canoe would be overturned and he would again be thrown into the water, and the advantage would all be with the savage, whose eyes were already shining with the triumph he thought was to be his.

Hardly realizing what he was doing, Jairus

quickly raised the paddle and brought it down with all his strength on the Indian's head just as his hand was stretched forth to grasp the edge of the canoe.

The hand was withdrawn as the blow fell, the efforts ceased, and before he fully realized what had taken place the Indian sank into the water. A few bubbles appeared, there was a ripple for a moment, and then the waters of the lake were as placid as if they had never witnessed a struggle such as that which was now ended.

Without waiting to see whether the Indian would rise again to the surface, and without a thought that the terrific blow he had struck could be other than fatal, Jairus at once began to wield the paddle, and, almost as desperate as he had been in the contest just finished, sent the canoe swiftly on up the lake. The struggle might have been seen from the shore, and the fear of possible pursuit furnished an added motive now for his continued efforts. For three-quarters of an hour he did not cease his paddling, but then the weary lad stopped and looked carefully about him.

Almost unconsciously he had kept his course far out in the lake. Whether he had been seen or not, he could not tell, but he must stop and determine what his further course was to be.

His first thought was of his mother. More than thirty hours had passed since the boys had left home, and he knew that not a word could have

come to her of their whereabouts. Doubtless, her first thought would be that they had been killed by the panther they had set forth to shoot. And yet she would not believe that all three of them had been slain by the savage beast. Perhaps she herself had gone out to learn the cause of this delay, and it was more than possible that she might have fallen a victim to the panther, which would be doubly savage, as she had just been robbed of her mate.

The thought made the weary boy shudder, and he thrust his paddle quickly into the water, determined to return and learn of his mother's condition, and, if she were still living, to assure her of his own welfare, and tell her where Samuel was.

He had taken two or three strokes when a new thought presented itself. Not more than thirty or thirty-five miles away lay old Fort Ty and its garrison. Did the men know of the presence of Burgoyne and his great army? And ought not his first duty to be to inform them of his discovery?

For a time Jairus hesitated, divided in his feelings between his anxiety for his mother and the duty of informing the garrison.

At last, with a heavy sigh he said to himself, "To the old fort, it is. Mother, you'll have to wait a bit before you get your message. I know you'll say I'm doing right, and if I can only get word to the fort in time, it may be that I'll be doing the very best thing for you, as well as for them. Here she goes!"

Hesitating no longer, Jairus again began to send the canoe forward up the lake. He knew that his task was to be no light one. To paddle the canoe thirty miles up the lake would tax his powers to the utmost, and so he began to measure his strength and try to keep the canoe steadily on her way, rather than to make the highest speed.

It was almost the middle of the afternoon now. The wind had all died away, and scarcely a ripple could be seen on the surface of the lake. The covering for his head had been lost in his plunge into the water, and the little clothing he had on was soaked and dripping. He cared for none of these things, however; for the day was warm and the night air would not be chilly.

Occasionally, he stopped and looked back over the lake. He could see the shores in the distance, and here and there appeared a bird flying low over the water. Occasionally, also, there would be a whirl on the surface, and he knew that some fish had arisen for his supper.

The thought brought a faint smile to his face as he realized that his own supper would be very like the dinner he had had — nothing.

When the excitement passed, and he was fully persuaded that he was not pursued, a strange weariness took hold upon him. His arms and back ached under the strain he was giving them, but he seldom relaxed his efforts. He had determined to bear the tidings he had to give to the garrison at

Ticonderoga; and the thought of what it might mean to them, and indirectly to his mother, his brother, and himself, provided the needful stimulus.

The afternoon passed, and the weary boy still paddled on. The sun sank lower and lower in the west, and finally disappeared. The stars came out in the sky; he could hear the occasional mournful calls of the owls on the shore; the night birds and bats appeared here and there, and darted about him as if they could not comprehend the meaning of his visit in the darkness.

The shores of the lake were not so far apart now as they had been. He stopped more frequently and listened. The night was not very clear, although he could make out the stars above him, but he could neither see nor hear anything to alarm him.

Jairus was a resolute lad, and his sturdy frame was capable of great endurance, but he was becoming thoroughly weary. His escape from the Indian, the race in the water, a race for life, and the long-continued paddling all combined now in their effects, and the boy was becoming almost exhausted.

He almost ceased to be mindful of danger, but still he paddled on and on, as if he were some machine. Would the end never come? The steady sound of his paddle was seldom broken now. An enemy might creep up near him and he would not have discovered him until he was close by. The one thought in the mind of the desperate boy was that, come what might, he must go on to

old Ty with his message, and then the labor would be ended and he could rest.

The darkness became deeper. The silence was almost oppressive and there were times when Jairus felt that he must shout, or he would go mad. His hands were raw and bleeding, his breath came in gasps, and if any one could have looked on his face they would have seen that it was marked with suffering. Still the canoe sped on; still the lad did not lay down the paddle.

Suddenly an interruption came. Almost before he was aware of it a boat of some kind shot across his bow. He indistinctly heard the sound of voices, and dimly realized that the party must consist of several men. He did not know whether he was afraid or glad; it made little difference now.

"Hello, the canoe! Stop! Give an account of yourself!"

He heard the command spoken in a low voice, and knew the boat was near. He ceased paddling, but made no reply to the hail. It seemed to him that his tongue was paralyzed, and he could not utter a sound.

"Didn't you hear the hail? Can't you give an account of yourself? You might get blown to smithereens by such tomfoolery."

Still Jairus made no reply, although he knew that there was a boat alongside now, and that some one had grasped the edge of the canoe.

For the past few miles Jairus had been on his

STILL THE CANOE SPED ON; STILL THE LAD DID NOT LAY DOWN THE PADDLE.

knees paddling, and even when he realized that the canoe had been taken in tow, and that he was being drawn through the water without any effort on his part, he did not change his position. All that he was aware of, was that some one had taken him, and that the end of his voyage, whatever that end might be, had come.

CHAPTER VII.

WITHIN THE FORT.

When Jairus first realized where he was, and what was about him, he found himself in a boat, and several men were with him. He had eaten nothing since early morning, and his struggle with the Panther and his ceaseless efforts during the remainder of the day and far into the night, for the morning was almost come when he arrived at the end of his voyage, had almost exhausted him.

He was only dimly conscious that he was not alone, and that the men about him were talking in low tones. Just how long he had been there he did not know, but as soon as he was aware of his surroundings, the purpose of his visit flashed into his mind, and he quickly raised himself into a sitting posture.

"Ah, the lad's come to," he heard one of the men say. "Now he can explain to us how he happened to be out in that ere canoe. Now, sonny, give us yer story."

Jairus realized that one of the men was speaking to him, but, tired as he was, he did not know into whose hands he had fallen. It was too dark to per-

ceive whether the men wore uniforms or not, but the twang in the speaker's tones led him to believe that he must belong to the region.

"Where am I? Who's got me? Who are you?" at last he managed to say.

"Who be we?" said the man who had spoken before. "Neow that ere's most too hard to tell. We've got some men here who've been a travellin' up and deown the arth as Satan did when he found Job. The proper question's, who be you? Don't ye mind us, but jest give a little account o' yerself. That's the proper thing to do jest at the present time."

Jairus was too weary to think, but he knew from the distance that he had covered that he must be somewhere near the American lines, and resolving to venture all in his reply, he said: "I've just escaped from Burgoyne's camp. I've been paddling that canoe since morning. I couldn't stop, for I wanted to get word to Ticonderoga that the British were coming up the lake."

Too exhausted to speak further, he ceased, and waited almost with a feeling of indifference for the reply to be spoken.

"Ye've brought yer goods to the correct market, young man. I don't know as ye've told us any news, for we happen to know what Burgoyne's up to, but 'twas a brave deed. 'Twas that, and Jeremiah Thatcher, for one, is glad ye've come. Tell us some more, will ye?"

Thus bidden, Jairus briefly related the story of his adventures, and as soon as he had finished, another of the men said, "Jeremiah, ye'd better take him right up to the general and let him tell his story."

"I'll take him, never you fear, Godlove Brown; but I'm not so onhuman as to do it afore I've cared for this man what's fallen among thieves, — no, I mean what's fallen out from 'em. I'll feed him first, and then take him up to the general."

Some food was given the half-famished boy, and, plain though it was, Jairus thought he never had tasted anything so good. By the time he had eaten, the dawn was beginning to appear in the east, and he could discern the faces of the men in the company. There were five in the boat with him, and their rough and rugged faces were beaming upon him with an expression of sympathy mingled with that of their interest.

"I'm ready to go now," said Jairus, greatly refreshed. "The sooner I go, the better for me."

"I'll take ye, young man," said Jeremiah, whom Jairus perceived to be a man about forty-five years of age.

He was tall and thin, but the lad could easily perceive that he was possessed of great strength. There was a twinkle in his eye, however, that betrayed his good heart, and Jairus was satisfied that he would only receive aid from him.

"Step into this skiff, kind sir," continued Jere-

miah, "and we'll find Gen'ral St. Clair afore he's had time to break his fast."

Jairus stepped into the skiff obediently, and took his seat in the stern as Jeremiah grasped the oars and began to row towards the shore.

What a relief it was to find himself with friends! The weary boy felt almost strong again, and his animation became at once apparent to his companion, who looked at him in a kindly manner, as he rowed on.

"Is General St. Clair in command of Ticonderoga?" inquired Jairus. "I thought that General Schuyler was there. But then I lived so far away, I never heard what was going on."

"Yes, sir, Gen'ral St. Clair's the man. General Schuyler's so-called friends wanted that little popinjay Gates to take hold here, but he's too big a man. I hev a dim suspicion as how Gates's nether garments pinch him a bit. Mebbe you've heard tell of sich folks afore?"

Jairus smiled as he replied: "I guess so, but has General St. Clair got men enough to make a stand against Burgoyne? There must be eight or ten thousand men with him."

"I guess so," replied Jeremiah, resting on his oars. "Now afore I go any farther, I want ye to tell me who ye be. Who are ye, anyway? I guess yer all right, but speak out, my son."

"My name's Jairus Goodwin, and I went in on the west side o' the lake with my mother and my brother

after my father died a few years ago on the other shore of the lake."

"Goodwin! Goodwin! Ye don't say so! Be ye any relation to Bartholomew Goodwin, what I used to know up among the green hills?"

"He was my father," replied Jairus quietly.

"Yer father! Ye don't say so! Why, I knew him better nor a book. Yes, a big sight better nor I knew any book," repeated the oarsman, with a smile. "Why, I used to play with your pa, then. I heard as how he had died. Yes, and didn't I hear as how his brother up at St. John's had kind a skinned the family out o' all their belongings?"

"Yes," replied Jairus simply. He had no thought of going into the details of his family history with the inquisitive man before him.

"Jest as I cacalated," said Jeremiah gleefully. "Jest ezactly as I cacalated. I might a known it when I first saw ye. Ye've got yer pa's nose and eyes."

Jairus only smiled by way of reply, and Jeremiah resumed his work at the oars. "Now that I know who ye be, I don't mind talkin'. Yes, I guess St. Clair's enough fer Burgoyne, seein' as old Ty's a pretty strong place. Pretty strong, ye know. We've got watch-boats out all the time, and we've got a lot o' brush and stuff fixed fer the Britishers to travel over when they come along here. Still, St. Clair found only about two thousand men in the

fort when he first came. He could have jest as many as Burgoyne's got, only there wasn't stuff enough here to feed so many."

"Why doesn't Congress furnish supplies?"

"Oh, that's somethin' no son o' woman can tell. It's reported as how they didn't believe the British was a comin' down this way till we heard Burgoyne had started out from Quebec. They thought they'd come along down the coast and make trouble fer the coast towns, ye see, so they tried to fix them up a bit. But bless yer heart, the fust thing we knew Burgoyne had started out and we wasn't ready. Still, I guess old Ty can hold her own. Then over at Independence there's artillery and batteries and things, and that's better fixed up with men and provisions than old Ty is. Yes, sir, you can rest yer boots on Mount Independence every time. I'll soon have ye up to the general's quarters now, though I don't b'lieve ye've brought much he didn't know afore."

"I wish I'd gone across the lake to my mother, then," said Jairus slowly.

"What's that about yer ma?" said Jeremiah, interested at once.

Jairus repeated the story of the manner in which he and his brother had left home, and by the time he had finished, they had left their skiff and arrived under the walls of the old fort.

Jeremiah had only whistled in reply to Jairus's story, and if the lad had observed him closely he

would have seen that his companion was unusually thoughtful.

His own attention, however, was soon drawn to the fort into which an entrance was readily gained, and both Jairus and the soldier were conducted to the quarters of General St. Clair.

It seemed to Jairus as if no power on earth could shake the walls of the old fort. It was the first time he had ever been within such a place, and he naturally was greatly impressed by all he saw. Indeed, his hopes began to rise that even the mighty army of John Burgoyne might not be able to do much against such a strongly fortified place as Ticonderoga was.

His attention, however, was soon withdrawn from the garrison to the general himself, into whose presence they were soon admitted. The commander plainly showed his Scotch ancestry in his speech, and his face also betrayed his original nationality. He was about forty-three years of age at this time, and had seen active service under Wolfe, and later in January, 1776, he had been made a colonel in the Continental army.

In August of that same year he had been promoted, and made a brigadier-general, and in that capacity had taken an active part in the battles of Trenton and Princeton. In February, 1777, he was made a major-general, and in June had taken command of Fort Ticonderoga by the order of General Philip Schuyler.

Jeremiah did the most of the talking as he and Jairus stood before the commander. General St. Clair listened attentively, and after explaining that the most of the information which Jairus brought he possessed already, he turned to the embarrassed boy and began to ask him questions.

"Do you know how many British troops are in General Burgoyne's army?"

"The report in the camp was that there were three thousand seven hundred and twenty-four."

"How many Germans were there?"

"I can't say positively, but one of the lieutenants told me there were three thousand and sixteen."

"I fancy there are a good many Tories and irregulars also?"

"Yes, and lots of Indians."

General St. Clair's face took on a scowl at the words, but he only said: "I'm glad you have brought me this information. It serves to confirm the reports our scouts have brought in. Where was it you left the British?"

"It was near the falls of the Bouquet."

"That, also, is what I have learned from the scouts. You'll take a place in our ranks, young man?"

"Yes. But I should like very much to go back home and look up my mother. I think I can be back before two days have passed."

"I see no objection to that. Be sure you come back."

"If there's no objection, I'd like to go along with him, general," interposed Jeremiah. "He's the son of an old friend and I'd like very much to help him. Besides, I'll see that he's back in camp on time."

"That can be arranged," said the general, and they left his quarters at once.

"Neow ye'll have to take a little nap, Jairus, afore we go. Besides, we don't want to start till night. Come along with me and I'll fix ye out."

Jairus hesitated, so eager was he to start at once, but in a moment he knew the old soldier had spoken truly and that they could well afford to put off their departure till night. They sought Jeremiah's quarters immediately, and soon both men were asleep.

It was dusk when Jairus opened his eyes. In the dim light he perceived that some one was standing near him. At first he could not determine who it was or where he was; but as he heard the voice, it all came back to him, and he quickly arose.

"There, ye're awake at last, are ye? It's time we was a goin'. Ye're a goin' to have company, too. 'Twon't be such a lonesome trip down the lake as ye had comin' up. I've got it all fixed, and as soon's ye've had suthin' to eat, we'll start."

"Who's going with me? Any one besides you?" asked Jairus quickly.

"Nary a one. I'll guess I'll be enough to satisfy ye. Come on and get yer supper."

Jairus arose obediently and as soon as he had

eaten the food the kind-hearted old soldier provided, they sought the shore of the lake and embarked in the little canoe in which Jairus had made his voyage on the preceding day.

All night long they toiled on, Jeremiah paddling most of the way and only permitting his young companion to take brief turns with him. "Ye've had enough for one mortal man, I should think," was all the remark he would make in explanation.

The sun had only been two hours above the horizon when they landed, and after carefully concealing the canoe they began to make their way towards the place where Jairus's home had been. The boy was trembling in his eagerness as they walked on together. Soon he would see his mother. Her fears would be relieved, and as soon as he had provided for her welfare, he would return to Ticonderoga and rejoin the army; for he was determined now to enter the struggle.

At last they arrived at the place from which they could look down upon the house, but a cry of dismay escaped the lips of Jairus as they gained the point. The house had disappeared and only ashes marked the spot where it had been.

CHAPTER VIII.

JEREMIAH INVESTIGATES.

For a moment Jairus could hardly believe that he was not dreaming as he looked at the sight before him. The trees and bushes about his home were standing just as they had been two days before; the water from the never-failing spring was trickling down the hillside; the birds were flitting about from bough to bough and filling the air with their songs. All things apparently were just as they had been when he and his two companions had started on their search for the panther's mate, all save the little house of logs which had been his home, and that of his mother and brother, for the past three years. But what a difference the loss of that made!

He noted that in one or two places little curls of smoke were still rising from the ashes, showing that the house could not have been burned many hours before. Here and there little clouds or eddies of ashes were caught up by the morning breeze and whirled about for a moment and then dropped once more into the mass. Almost nothing of the timbers remained, except that here and there a few pieces of

charred wood could be seen, but even they were almost concealed from sight by heaps and piles of ashes.

A low cry escaped from the startled boy's lips as, recalled to himself, he darted forward and began to examine the ground about the ruins, looking for something which might indicate whether his mother had fled, or had perished in the downfall of her home.

He had gone far in advance of his companion as they had drawn near the familiar place, and in his eagerness to be the first to greet his mother and relieve her from the fears and anxiety which he knew she must have for her absent boys, he had almost forgotten that Jeremiah was with him.

He was reminded of the fact that he was not alone, however, by the startled exclamation of the old soldier as he hastened up the hillside and stopped in surprise as he, too, saw the desolate scene before him.

"Gum!" said Jeremiah. "Gum" was the one word he indulged himself in when language failed to express his sentiments. "Gum! Jairus, ye don't mean to say this was where ye lived, do ye?"

"Yes," replied the sadly troubled boy. "Two days ago I left mother here, and the house was all right. Now look at it! Look at it! The house is gone and I don't know whether mother was burned up in it, or whether she's been killed and scalped by the Indians or carried away by some of the British. Help me, Jeremiah! Oh, mother!" and the heart-

broken boy could not check the tears that began to pour down his face.

"We'll look about and see what we can find," replied Jeremiah. "I never believed 'twas a very good thing to give up ev'rything afore ye had to. The house is gone, that's a fact what none can dispute, but as fer yer ma, that's another matter entirely."

Jeremiah, who was himself almost as keen as an Indian in his skill in woodcraft, dropped immediately upon his hands and knees, and began to examine the ground about the place.

"Ye'd better do jest as I'm a doin', Jairus. We'll make a circle, or a 'detoar' as they say in the fort. Ye go reound one way, and I'll go reound the other, and when we meet we'll begin to compare notes."

Jairus immediately acted upon the suggestion, and upon his hands and knees began to crawl slowly around the place. He examined every spot of ground in his pathway, turning up the grass blades and striving to discover some trace of visitors, and something which might indicate how many there had been of them and in which direction they had gone when they had departed.

There were moments when his eyes were so blurred that he could not see the ground before him, and he was compelled to wait and go over the same place again. Then, as the picture of the sufferings of his mother rose before him and he thought of the panther or of possible redcoats

who might have fired the house and carried her away with them, his heart would be bitter and hard, and the first impulse in his thoughts was to start straight for the camp of Burgoyne and demand to know what had become of her, or seek her release if she were a captive there.

He said nothing, however, but worked on slowly and patiently and after a little time came face to face with Jeremiah, who also was on his hands and knees. One glance at him, however, revealed his lack of success.

"Did ye find anything, Jairus?" inquired Jeremiah, looking at him, as the troubled boy thought, with unusual tenderness.

"Not a thing. But I've been thinking that possibly somebody might be hiding here and expecting we would return, and wing us as they would a duck on the lake. It isn't fair nor right to keep you here, Jeremiah; for some one may pick you off any minute."

"Naw, I guess not," replied the soldier, glancing keenly about him nevertheless as he spoke. "Naw, I guess not. I thought o' that very thing, but I took a good look around afore I dropped on my knees. Mebbe when they saw Jeremiah in that position, it made 'em start off, they was so scared; but I guess there isn't anybody a watchin' of us. Let's go reound agin. Mebbe you'll find somethin' on my side or I'll find somethin' on yours. Let's try it, anyway. There's nothin' like tryin'."

Again the two men went carefully around the circle, but when they met it was evident that neither had made any discovery, and Jairus for a moment could hardly trust himself to speak.

"We'll find somethin', never ye fear, Jairus," said Jeremiah consolingly. "Ev'ry knot that can be tied can be ontied, that's the motto what I've always gone on. Neow let's draw back here out o' the sight o' any callers what might happen along, and talk it over," and leading the way he and his companion soon seated themselves on the ground within the shelter of the adjacent forest.

"Neow let's look over the facts o' the case. First of all, the house is burned up. That's plain to be seen, and there isn't a bit o' difference in opinion about that, is there?"

Jairus shook his head, but made no other reply.

"Fact number two is that it must a got afire. Question — did she set it afire, or did somebody do it for her?"

Still Jairus was silent, and Jeremiah, speaking as if his companion had replied as he desired to his questions, went on with his investigation.

"Answer first — she probably didn't set it afire. Neow, if she didn't set it afire, then it's jest as plain as the nose on my face somebody else did it for her."

"It might have caught fire," suggested Jairus.

"Yes, it might, and probably it did, but it was set afire first, I tell ye; log houses don't have a habit of getting on fire all by themselves — leastwise not

at this time o' year. Neow let's proceed. Question number three — did she have any enemies who would be likely to do the job for her? Any neighbors now, or redskins, that was agin her?"

"She always fed the Indians when they came to the door. The only enemy she had was my uncle. But he lives away up at St. John's and it isn't very probable he had anything to do with it."

"Reasonable, my son, reasonable. I know that story and I know the man. He's got a disposition to do jest sech things, but I don't b'lieve he's anywhere near. There's too many soldiers and too much likelihood of somebody gettin' hurt for him to be around here. No, he'd rather scare helpless widows and orphins than be anywhere near men. Jairus, was it forenoon or afternoon when you boys started after that catamount?"

"Forenoon. Why?"

"Never mind the whys and wherefores now. I'm a gettin' after facts; that's all I want jest at present. What time did ye have dinner?"

"We didn't come home to dinner at all that day. I thought I told you."

"Ye did. Ye did. But what time did ye usually have dinner? That's what I mean."

"About noon."

"Jest as I ca'c'lated. Jest ezactly. Neow I should figger that them ashes must 'a' been smokin' for a good twenty-four hour. Don't they look so to ye?"

"Yes," replied Jairus, somewhat mystified by his companion's manner. "Yes, I guess so."

"Well, now, I tell ye. I'd stake my gun against a barrel stave that yer mother waited for ye to come home to dinner and ye didn't come. Prob'ly she waited and waited, and then she began to think about catamounts and things, and finally she couldn't stand it a minute longer, and by the time it began to get dark she started out to see what had become of her babies. She didn't find 'em, and what's more, she didn't find somethin' else besides."

"What?" inquired Jairus eagerly; for he was all interest now.

"Her way. She got lost or hid from the redskins somewhere in the woods. Leastwise, I don't think she was here when the house took afire."

"Why not?"

"'Cause I've been clear round the clearing and there isn't a trace of a woman's foot anywhere to be seen. So, ye see, she didn't run out to the spring as she would 'a' done for water if the house got afire when she was here alone; and she wasn't carried away, either, for there isn't a track on the ground to show that."

"Maybe she was burned up inside the house. That might happen."

"No, it couldn't, either. She wouldn't stay inside o' even her own house to get burned up, would she? Leastwise, that isn't what *I* think Jairus Goodwin's ma would do."

"Then you think we'd better go down by the sheep-pen and see what we can find there?" said Jairus eagerly, leaping to his feet as he spoke, and preparing to start immediately.

"That's jest what I think we'd better do," replied Jeremiah, at once arising and joining the eager boy.

He did not allude to any of the unexpressed fears in his own heart; for he was doing his utmost to cheer the almost heart-broken boy, and this one possibility that lay before them he was more than eager to test.

Jairus, in his eagerness, ran ahead of his companion, and soon the soldier was left at a considerable distance behind. They had covered about half the distance to the sheep-pen when Jeremiah suddenly noticed something near the path. He stopped; his face clouded, and in a moment he uttered a low call that soon brought Jairus back to his side.

"What is it, Jeremiah? Have you heard something?" whispered Jairus.

"No, but I've seen somethin'. What's that in them bushes there?"

Jairus looked quickly at the place his companion indicated, and, with one quick exclamation, rushed in and brought out a faded sunbonnet. "That's mother's! That's mother's!" he cried. "She had it on the very morning we left home. She always wore it when she went out-doors. But, oh, Jeremiah! she's dead. I know she's dead. Whoever

burned the house took her, and probably threw that away when they started to leave."

"Naw, that's not it, my boy," said Jeremiah, striving to console the sobbing lad. "Naw, not a bit of it. She was runnin', and lost it off in the bushes. Mebbe she was comin' home and saw somebody around the house, and she was in such a hurry she never stopped to pick it up when she lost it off her head. Come on, we'll take a peep at the bushes and mebbe they'll tell us somethin' we don't know."

For a half-hour they searched in the bushes, but not a trace of the missing woman could they find. Not a twig was broken or out of place, nor could they discover anything to show that any one had passed that way.

"We'll go on down to the sheep-pen," said Jeremiah at last, "and see what we can find there;" and without a further word being spoken the two men started on again and soon came to the little clearing on the border of which stood the sheep-pen.

It was unoccupied now, and the open door stood just as the Indians had left it when they led out the sheep. There were dark spots still on the ground that marked the places where the slaughter had occurred, but everything else appeared to be just as Jairus had known it before that fatal morning.

"We'll look around here a bit," said Jeremiah consolingly. "Perhaps we'll strike a trail, or somethin' what'll surprise us."

The surprise came sooner than he expected; for

the words were hardly spoken before there was the sharp, quick report of a rifle, and the bullet struck one of the logs of the sheep-pen near where Jeremiah was standing.

"Here, come in here," said Jairus quickly, and the two men rushed into the pen and hastily drew the rude door after them.

Then peering out between the chinks in the logs, Jairus saw a little cloud of smoke high up in the beech-tree, and he knew at once that the platform the three boys had made there was occupied again.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RETURN OF DAVID JONES.

It is time for us to return and follow the fortunes of Samuel, whom we left in the camp of Burgoyne's army near the falls of the Bouquet, at the time when his brother and David Jones, accompanied by Wyandot Panther, had started to cross Lake Champlain on their errand for the general.

For a time the young prisoner — for he looked upon himself in that light, although he was supposedly among the militia or "irregulars" who were gathering constantly and in great numbers at the British camp — wandered about the place and looked with eager interest at what was going on about him.

There was an air of confidence displayed by all, and which Samuel feared was but too well grounded. The complete equipments, the abundance of supplies and provisions, the presence of Indians in their war-paint, the eagerness of the men to be led forward, all combined to render Samuel somewhat downcast, troubled as he was by the absence of his brother, and by his increasing anxiety for his mother.

He knew that comparative liberty was his, so long as he remained within the lines. No one accosted him and he was free to come and go as he chose; but when he thought of his distant home and the sorrow of his mother, and how she must be suffering in her fears and anxieties by this time, he became almost desperate and there were wild impulses in his mind to rush past the line of guards and strive to make his way home again. Calmer thoughts prevailed, however, as he came to realize the hopelessness of trying to escape from the camp by any open means.

None the less was he determined to leave when the opportunity for doing so should present itself, but he at last decided to await the return of his brother, and perhaps between them they might be able to devise some scheme which might aid them.

He had not seen Arthur anywhere in the camp that morning. He thought little of that at the time, however, but when the noontime came and still Arthur did not appear, he began to be puzzled by his continued absence. Not that he cared to see him on his own account, for his anger at his cousin had steadily increased, as he thought how all the troubles that had come upon himself and his brother and mother were to be traced directly to his cowardly acts.

He found no one among the soldiers or irregulars whom he recognized, and, left to himself, he tried to pass the time as best he could until his

brother should return. David had assured him that they would both be back long before sunset, and he knew he could attempt nothing before that time.

The long day passed slowly and as the night drew near, neither Arthur nor Jairus put in appearance. Here and there small fires were kindled in the camp, the soldiers evidently, under the strong confidence of the leaders in their own success, having been given a freedom which under ordinary circumstances would have been denied them. After he had had his own supper, Samuel wandered again through the camp, watching with curious eyes the contentment and confidence of the red-coated men. Songs could be heard as they were sung by little groups of soldiers, who lay stretched upon the ground in the cool of the evening.

One of these, which was new to Samuel, he thought must have become very popular; for he heard it in no less than four different places, and the enthusiasm with which it was voiced clearly showed the confidence of the singers: —

Ye Yankees who, mole-like, still throw up the earth,
And like them, to your follies are blind from your birth;
Attempt not to hold British troops at defiance,
True Britons, with whom you pretend an alliance.

Mistake not; such blood ne'er runs in your veins,
'Tis no more than the dregs, the lees, or the drains:
Ye affect to talk big of your hourly attacks;
Come on! and I'll warrant we'll soon see your backs.

Such threats of bravadoes serve only to warm
The true British hearts, you ne'er can alarm ;
The Lion, once roused, will strike such a terror,
Shall show you, poor fools, your presumption and error.

And the time will soon come when your whole rebel race
Will be drove (driven) from the lands, nor dare show your face :
Here's a health to great George, may he fully determine
To root from the earth all such insolent vermin.

Shouts of applause greeted the song, and Samuel, who was standing back within the shadows, remained a little longer as he saw one of the soldiers pushed forward by his companions, and after an apparent confusion of a moment, in response to their repeated calls, begin to sing alone : —

When Congress sent great Washington,
  All clothed in power and breeches,
To meet old Britain's warlike sons,
  And make some rebel speeches ;

'Twas then he took his gloomy way
  Astride his dapple donkeys,
And travelled well both night and day
  Until he reached the Yankees.

Away from camp, 'bout three miles off
  From Lily he dismounted ;
His sergeant brushed his sunburnt wig
  While he the specie counted.

All prinked up in full bag-wig ;
  The shaking notwithstanding,
In leather tights, oh, glorious sight !
  He reached the Yankee landing.

Full many a child went into camp,
All dressed in homespun kersey,
To see the greatest rebel scamp
That ever crossed o'er Jersey.

The rebel clowns, oh, what a sight!
Too awkward was their figure;
'Twas yonder stood a pious wight,
And here and there a nigger.

Upon a stump he placed (himself),
Great Washington did he,
And through the nose of Lawyer Close
Proclaimed great Liberty.

The patriot brave, the patriot fair,
From fervor had grown thinner,
So off they marched with patriot zeal
And took a patriot dinner.

Renewed laughter and applause greeted the efforts of the singer, and there were loud calls for another song; but Samuel, discouraged by the confidence and boldness he saw all about him, and feeling more homesick and forlorn than ever before in his short life, soon left the men and sought the seclusion of his own tent to await the coming of his brother.

His feeling of disgust at many of the sights he had seen in the camp had not left him, and with all his soul he longed to leave it all behind him and be once more in the quiet of their little clearing where they had troubled none, and none, until the preceding day, had ever troubled them.

He could do nothing before Jairus returned, and he waited patiently for his coming. He wondered where he was and whether any accident had befallen him. As the minutes dragged on and the silence was broken only by the noises of the surrounding camp, he began to feel drowsy, and soon his head was nodding and the troubled boy became unconscious.

He did not know how much time had elapsed, when he was aroused by the presence of some one in the tent. Darkness was all about him, and silence rested over the camp.

His first thought was of his brother, and in a low voice he called, "Jairus! Jairus! Is that you?"

"No, it's not Jairus."

"Oh, it's you, David, is it? I didn't recognize your voice at first. Where's Jairus?"

"At the bottom of Lake Champlain, I hope with all my heart. It's where he deserves to be, anyway, whether he is or not."

"Why, what's the trouble? What's happened to Jairus? Where is he?" Samuel was all awake now and was pouring forth his questions excitedly.

"I don't know where he is, but I know what he is. He's a traitor. I never thought he was a low-lived Whig, but if you must have it, why I'll tell you. I left him and the Panther in the canoe and told them to paddle down the shore and meet me, for I had to go a little farther. Well, what should that young reprobate do, but get a drop on the

Panther and take the canoe away from him. They had quite a tussle, and I suppose Jairus thinks he left the Panther for dead. He hit him over the head with the paddle and the redskin sank under the water. He was just fooling the boy, though; for, in spite of the hole Jairus made in his head, he knew just what he was doing, and he only waited a bit before he came to the surface again, and saw the young man making off as if all of the Indians in General Burgoyne's army were after him. And they are after him, too, and he'll find it out before long. The Panther's got his blood up and he won't rest until he's paid off Master Jairus Goodwin, and with interest."

Samuel was listening eagerly, but he could not see his companion's face. The tones of his voice, however, showed that in spite of his apparent rage, David was not as angry as one who did not know him might suppose.

There was no man in Burgoyne's army of a kinder heart, and while he was devoted to the cause of the king, he had little of the intense bitterness that many of the men on either side displayed in those troublous times.

Aware of this, Samuel was, perhaps, not so keenly on his guard as he might have been, had he not known something of the character of David Jones.

"Then Jairus has got away, has he?" said Samuel. "Why didn't he take me, too?"

"Oh, he left you here for me, and here you'll stay

too, or my name's not David Jones. I'm going to keep an eye on you myself, and as I've just had the promise of being made a lieutenant, I think I can watch you a little. Now I'm sorry for Jairus. Yes, I'm downright sorry. He's made a big mistake. This war will all be over in a few weeks, and when he goes back home, if he's ever lucky enough to get there, he'll find the king looks after his own. But that isn't the worst of it!"

"What's worse?" said Samuel quietly. He had hardly realized what David was saying, he had been so elated over the escape of his brother. He was trying to conjecture what his course would be.

"The Panther's worse. He's after Jairus, let me tell you, and it'll go hard with him if he ever catches him. You'll have to walk a chalk-line here, or they'll think you've Whig blood in your veins, too. You'll have to be careful now, if you ever are."

Samuel made no reply. He realized that David was speaking truly, and his own outlook was not very promising. However, he had all of a younger brother's confidence in an older one, and felt that somehow Jairus would be able to help him.

Meanwhile, he quickly realized that he must be very careful not to increase suspicion against himself, and simply wait for his time to come, too. That it would come, he had not the slightest doubt. It was well for him that he had all of a boy's hopefulness and could not see the experiences that lay within the next few weeks.

"Did you get many of the irregulars?" he inquired, after a silence of a moment.

"We did that. The woods are just full of them. I found out a good deal about the state of things at Ty, too. The Yankees are in bad shape. Gates has got the sulks. St. Clair never had much of any brains, and Schuyler's too tender-hearted to do much damage anywhere. I shouldn't be surprised if the whole thing was over in less than a month. Just as soon as St. Leger and Sir Henry join us, the time for the doxology has come. But it's been a pretty good day for me, even if Jairus did play the coward and step out."

"Not very much of a coward, I should think, from your story of his struggle with the Panther."

"Not that kind of a coward. Oh, Jairus is ready enough to stand up and fight, but I mean his pulling out the way he did. Still, I'm going to be a lieutenant and I'll manage to bear up under it, I guess. Just as soon as we're on the march again, I'm to have the place."

"I'm glad for you, Lieutenant Jones," said Samuel. No one could fail to like the warm-hearted young man, who was always ready to do a favor for another, and never appeared to think of himself.

"That's good of you, Sam," replied David. "You're not the only one that'll be glad, though. Every one of my five brothers is in the army, and Jonathan's going to be a captain. They're as proud of me as if — as if I was their own brother. But

Jane'll be prouder than any. You never saw Jane, did you?"

"No, I never saw Jane."

"Well, she's got the blackest hair, and the brightest eye, and the straightest figure you ever saw. Yes, Jane'll be proud of me and I hope she'll never have more cause to feel ashamed of me than she has to-night. But I'm sorry for Jairus, I am that, Samuel. I'm awfully sorry. If he ever lives to get back into camp, he'll be in trouble, let me tell you!"

"'If he ever lives.' What do you mean?"

"Why, I told you the Panther was after him. I'm sorry, and I tried to head him off, but it was no good. Well, after we came back to-night the first fellow we met was your cousin there, Arthur Goodwin. He walked along with us and I told him about Jairus's getting away. He didn't say much then, but he's hatched up a scheme, and he and the Panther and one or two others have gone back to your house, and they're going to wait for him there. Arthur said Jairus would put straight for that place to look after his mother, and they'd be sure to get him, and I guess he's more'n half right, too. I'm sorry for Jairus. I am, indeed."

"What? What's that you say?" said Samuel excitedly. "Arthur and the Panther have gone back to our house?"

"That's what I said, and I'm sorry for Jairus. What did he want to do such a thing for? It passes my understanding, I must confess."

"When did they go?"

"About an hour ago."

The conversation ceased. Samuel perceived in a few minutes that his companion was asleep, but the hours passed and no sleep came to him. He was thinking of a little log house, in a clearing only a few miles distant, and of possible tragedies that would be, or might even now have been, enacted there; and the longer he thought, the more desperate and troubled he became.

CHAPTER X.

BURGOYNE APPROACHES TICONDEROGA.

It was long after midnight before Samuel fell into a troubled sleep, and the sun had not appeared when he awoke. He looked at the sleeping lieutenant, but soon deciding to leave him to his slumber, silently left the tent and wandered about the camp searching for any one who might be able to give him some information concerning the expedition to his home.

No one was stirring, however, and the presence of the guards clearly showed him that he must not wander beyond the confines of the camp. For two hours the troubled boy kept up his vigil, vainly hoping that Arthur, or the Panther, or some one might be seen who could give him some information about his brother. Every time any one appeared near the borders of the camp, Samuel eagerly sought him, half hoping and yet half fearing that he might be a messenger, or some one of the returning party.

He knew that Jairus would not be taken easily unless he was surprised and overpowered suddenly,

but the great undefined fear in his heart was that he might not be brought back to the camp. He shuddered as he thought of two scalps he might at any moment discover dangling from the belts of some painted savages.

It was true, as Samuel well knew, that General Burgoyne had given strict orders that all prisoners were to be brought alive into the camp, and that the reward for a captive was far greater than for a scalp; but he thought he was more familiar with the character of the Indians than was the British general, and, besides, he knew enough of the disposition of his brother to believe that there might such a provocation be given to those, who had gone to surprise him, that a tomahawk or a bullet would be considered the only means of settling the trouble. And there was his mother, too, and the thought of her helplessness only served to increase the fears of the anxious boy.

At last, when all the soldiers had appeared and breakfast had been eaten, Samuel returned to the tent for something to eat himself and to confer again with Lieutenant David, who, in spite of his intense loyalty to the king, he knew was not unfriendly to Jairus.

But David had gone when Samuel entered the tent, and after going out again he remained watching through the hours of the day for some one to come with the information he longed to receive.

The day passed, however, and neither the Indians

nor Arthur made their appearance in the camp. Nor had he seen David when the shadows of evening again fell over the forest.

After he had had his supper, however, David appeared and Samuel hailed him eagerly. "Have you heard anything of Arthur or the Panther?"

"Not a word," replied David; "but I don't mind telling you I hardly think you will hear right away."

"Why not?"

"Well, the case's about like this. Maybe you've heard me speak of Jenny?" David's face flushed slightly as he spoke, and he looked curiously at his companion.

"Well, yes; I think I have heard you mention her once or twice," replied Samuel, smiling a little in spite of the anxiety in his own heart. "What's she got to do with it?"

"It's this way," said David. "Jenny M'Crea hasn't lived up here forever. Her father used to be a Presbyterian minister down near Paulus Hook, New Jersey. Over in New York Mrs. M'Neil lived, and she was a great friend of Jenny's. Her name wasn't M'Neil first, you know, for her first husband's name was Campbell, but he was drowned and afterwards she married M'Neil. He, too, was drowned, and then Mrs. M'Neil moved up near Fort Edward into a place he had owned there. Mr. M'Crea died, too, soon afterwards and then Jenny came up here to live with her brother, who had a place not very far from Mrs. M'Neil's."

"That's how you came to know her, is it?" said Samuel.

"Yes, that was the way of it," replied David, who evidently was talking on his favorite topic. "You see, Jenny spent lots of her time with her friend, Mrs. M'Neil, and as she lived right near us it didn't take me long to become acquainted with her. There were six of us boys, and to tell you the truth, I was a little afraid at first that she'd take a fancy to one of the others, especially to my brother Jonathan. He's the one that's got a captain's commission, you know, and he's under General Fraser, just as you and I are. Well, the bother of it was that Jenny's brother was a hot Whig. I don't think Jenny feels so herself, for maybe she's listened a bit to what I've had to say to her," and again David laughed and blushed. "Well, her brother's been sending for her to come down to Albany, where he thought she'd be safer, you know; but, bless you, Jenny didn't go!"

"What's all that got to do with my brother Jairus? I don't see any connection," said Samuel.

"Why, it's this way. We wanted to get Jairus back into the ranks, and I'm not without hope that he'll be given another chance, and that he'll take it. Of course he'll take it! Well, when the party started out to get him, I fixed it so that the Panther and some of the others should go on and get Jenny and bring her back to the camp. I don't mind telling you that she's just sent me word that her brother had given his last orders to join him, and

that if she didn't join me she'd have to go down the river in a bateau."

"You don't mean to say you'd take her in the army, do you?"

"I don't like to, and yet there are a good many women here and I guess it's safer than it would be anywhere around Fort Edward, or even in Albany; for we'll be there before you know it, and then there'll be trouble. You see, there's the Baroness de Riedesel and Mrs. General Fraser, and —"

"Yes, I know. Then your plan was to have only a part of the men stop for Jairus, and the others go on to Fort Edward and get your sweetheart."

"Yes, that's about it. Jairus will be sure to go back home after his mother, and I don't think there'll be any trouble about getting him. And then he can do something for your mother — I don't know just what, but it'll be fixed up all right some way, I know — and he'll come with them to the camp, and the others can go on and do my errand for me. You see, Mrs. M'Neil's a cousin of General Fraser, and she may come into camp, too. If she does, why it'll be all the better for Jenny."

Samuel said nothing more, and as it was now late they both turned in for the night; but try as he would, sleep would not come to the lad. The picture of the little log cabin would somehow continually rise before him, and more than once he almost fancied he could hear the startled call of Jairus as the Indians rushed upon him. As for

Arthur, he had no confidence in him, and somehow he never thought of Jairus in any other light than that of a prisoner or of a victim of the treacherous Indians. He knew that the Panther, in spite of David's words, would never forgive Jairus for the plight in which he had left him.

On the following day, there was a stir among the soldiers which plainly indicated that a forward movement was about to be made. Samuel waited eagerly for some word from the party which had gone to his home, but no word came, and the army soon started.

It was with a heavy heart that Samuel joined them. No one had come, and not a word had been received from Arthur or the Panther. Somehow he felt relieved after David's story of the further advance they were to make, but he knew his mother could not go, and certainly Jairus would not leave her unless he was compelled to. No, there was no solution for the difficult problem, and no further light was received before the army halted once more.

The days passed, and still no word came. Even David was becoming alarmed, and many were the conversations he held with Samuel, each vainly striving to console the other.

Meanwhile the forces of Burgoyne were steadily increased by the arrival of fresh bands of irregulars who had come in from the surrounding regions, and of painted Indians, who for the present were keen allies of the British general.

Indeed, as Samuel's hopes decreased those of the men about him seemed to rise. The lowest camp-followers seemed to think there could be only one outcome to the expedition. Burgoyne himself was bold and sure, his division generals shared in his confidence, and the contagion of their feelings quickly spread throughout the army.

The old mountains and the clear waters of the lake had never seen a sight like that when at last the army embarked. In advance moved the light birch-bark canoes of the Indians, the painted faces and feathers of the warriors presenting a picturesque and weird appearance. Behind them moved the barges in which were General Fraser's men, and in the midst of them was Samuel Goodwin. They were drawn out in one long line and flanked with gunboats on each side.

Next came the great frigates, the *Royal George* and the *Invincible*, but they were not alone, for other armed and well-equipped vessels aided in making up the fleet. Protected by this strong escort, came the main body and the generals, while the hangers-on and the camp-followers brought up the rear of the procession; and better far would it have been for the good name of those who began the campaign if these same followers had remained so far in the rear that they never would have caught up with the main body.

Exhilaration and confidence were manifest on every side. The beautiful day in June, the moun-

tains forming the framework of the picture in the distance, the clear, sparkling waters of the lake, the strength of the army and the weakness of the foes against whom they were moving, all combined to render the men expectant and confident.

The irregulars had been greatly increased in numbers. This in part had been caused by the fears of the scattered people, many of whom were loyal to the colonies, while others were willing now to bow before the advancing general and his great army. In part, however, the proclamation, which General Burgoyne had caused to be drawn up and scattered among the people of Vermont, had brought the new men into the camp.

The heading of this proclamation was as follows: "*By John Burgoyne, Esq., Lieutenant-General of His Majesty's army in America, Colonel of the Queen's regiment of light dragoons, Governor of Fort William, in North Britain, one of the Representatives of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament, and commanding an army and fleet on an expedition from Canada,*" *etc.*

This pompous heading was followed by an equally pompous proclamation, in which "John Burgoyne, Esq.," set forth the strength of his armies and fleets, and the power, justice, and mercy of the king. He then extolled his own purposes, bitterly condemned the "arbitrary imprisonment, confiscation of property, persecution and torture, unprecedented in the inquisitions of the Romish church,

and the palpable enormities" of which the "rebels" had been guilty. He promised to hold forth protection and security. The proclamation closed with these words:—

"*In consciousness of Christianity, my royal master's clemency, and the honor of soldiership, I have dwelt upon this invitation and wish for more persuasive terms to give it impression. And let not people be led to disregard it, by considering their distance from the immediate situation of my camp. I have but to give stretch to the Indian forces under my direction, and they amount to thousands, to overtake the hardened enemies of Great Britain and America. I consider them the same wherever they may lurk.*

"*If, notwithstanding their endeavors and sincere inclinations to effect them, the frenzy of hostility should remain, I trust I shall stand acquitted in the eyes of God and man in denouncing and executing the vengeance of the State against the wilful outcasts. The messengers of justice, of wrath, await them in the field, and devastation, famine, and every concomitant horror that a reluctant but indispensable prosecution of military duty must occasion, will bar the way to their return.*"

The proclamation had its effect on certain of the weaker ones in the region, and also on those who either were Tories at heart or were alarmed by the approach of the great army.

The American watch-boats quickly reported Bur-

goyne's approach, and preparations for resisting the invaders were rapidly made.

On June 29th, 1777, the British army was near Ticonderoga. Burgoyne, who was a good speaker, made a very stirring appeal to his soldiers and gave out as the watchword: "*This army must not retreat.*"

On the following day, Fraser's corps landed in full view of the fortress and Samuel Goodwin, heart-sick and disheartened, was among them.

CHAPTER XI.

BESIEGED.

JAIRUS GOODWIN and his companion, when they had securely fastened the door of the sheep-pen, and had seen the little cloud of smoke hovering near the platform in the beech-tree, were thoroughly alarmed.

It was true they had found a shelter, which for the moment was safe, but only a few moments had passed before they realized that they were in a situation of no little peril, and from which the possibility of an escape was not very promising.

Only one gun had been heard, but that fact might mean much or little according to circumstances. For all that they knew, they might be surrounded by enemies, and at the thought Jairus looked again at the fastenings of the rude door, which they had closed in great haste when they entered. He peered out again between the chinks, but there was nothing to be seen to indicate the presence of an enemy. The smoke had disappeared, the little squirrels had resumed their chattering, as they darted about among the trees, and

the perfect quiet of a summer day apparently rested over all.

They were penned up as prisoners, however; of that fact there could be no doubt. The presence of Jeremiah, the whistling of the bullet as it had passed so near them, the recollection of the one sharp report, all proved the fact, and when a few minutes had passed, Jairus, who was the first to break the silence, turned to his companion and whispered: —

"What do you make of it, Jeremiah? What do you think?"

"I'm a doin' my thinkin' jest neow," replied Jeremiah slowly. "I can't say as I see very much. I 'most wish I could see somethin'. It would help, anyway."

"Do you think there are many out there in the beech-tree?"

"Naw, not in that tree; but I wouldn't promise that some of the other trees didn't have any inhabitants. I'm rather expectin' we shall see or hear somethin' that'll be an eye-opener, pretty soon. I can't tell yet whether it's Indians or white men."

"I rather think there's one white man in the crowd, anyway," replied Jairus, as he went on to relate the story of the building of the platform, and the knowledge which Arthur must have of it.

"That looks likely," replied Jeremiah at last. "It's jest as like as not that young cousin o' yers might have happened to think ye'd come back

here to see yer ma, and he thought mebbe ye could be caught; for o' course he knows by this time that ye didn't go back to Burgoyne's camp. Trust him for that."

"He wouldn't have come alone, if he's out there," replied Jairus emphatically. "I know him too well for that. No, sir, if Arthur Goodwin's out there, he's got plenty of company, you may rest your soul on that fact."

"I am a restin' it," said Jeremiah soberly; "but the trouble is, I don't want to rest it. We'll keep our mouths shut and our eyes open for a spell, and somethin'll happen."

Jairus followed the implied suggestion of his companion, and said nothing more. Both he and Jeremiah now began to keep a careful watch upon the forest.

The platform itself could not be seen from the sheep-pen, but it was possible to see some little distance on every side into the forest, which had been largely cleared of underbrush. The fact that an open space lay between them and the trees was a source of comfort, for no attack could be made upon them without the attacking party first exposing itself.

An hour now passed, and not a word was spoken. Jeremiah had taken a seat on the ground where he could peer out between the logs and see all that was occurring in front of the pen. He sat there almost as motionless as a statue, and seldom removed his eyes from the scene before him.

Jairus had occasionally changed his position and had gone to various parts of the sheep-pen and peered out into the surrounding forest; but nothing could be seen to indicate the presence of enemies. He wished Jeremiah would speak to him, for the silence and suspense were becoming almost unbearable. It seemed to him that the besiegers must have departed. Indeed, the whole experience was almost like a dream to him now, save when he thought of his mother and of the pile of ashes which marked the spot where his home had been.

At last he could bear it no longer. Jeremiah must speak to him, if it was nothing more than a word to show that he was not unmindful of his presence.

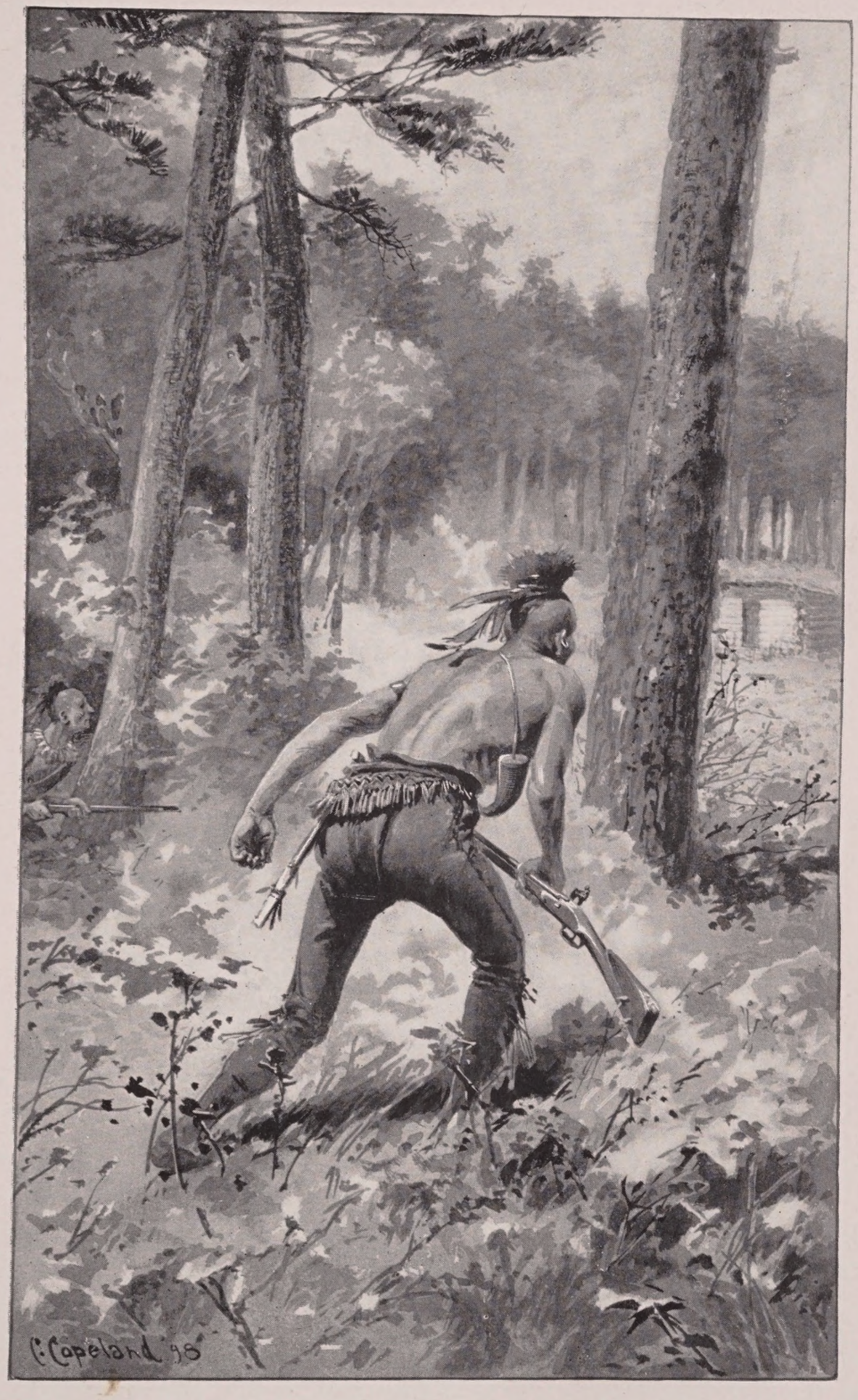
"Jeremiah," whispered Jairus, "Jeremiah, don't you think it'll do to get out of here now?"

Jeremiah made no reply except to lift his hand in warning and then point to the forest.

Jairus dropped on his knees and, following the directions, again looked at the place which his companion had been watching.

At first he could see nothing unusual, but suddenly he discovered an Indian crouching low, and creeping cautiously along near the ground. What was he trying to do? And why was he so near the borders of the forest?

The question was not solved, however; for his attention was drawn to Jeremiah, who had slowly changed his position and taking his gun was hold-



SUDDENLY HE DISCOVERED AN INDIAN QUICKLY DARTING FROM TREE TO TREE.

ing its muzzle near to the chinks and watching the movements of the savage.

"There's hardly space for a bullet to creep through," whispered Jeremiah, "but I'm goin' to try the effect of a shot. It may teach 'em a bit of a lesson. We're in a trap, but they haven't got the game yet. There now. Look out!"

Jairus "looked out" just as the report of the gun sounded, which almost deafened him.

"Missed him! Gum! but that was a close call. I'd a hit him if there'd been a little more space atween these logs!" muttered Jeremiah.

Jairus was too busy watching the Indian to heed his companion's words. The bullet had struck the back of the tree from behind which the savage had just emerged, and sent the splinters in every direction. The Indian, startled for a moment, had dodged quickly back into the shelter, and a yell which seemed to Jairus to come from a hundred men greeted the report of the gun.

"I thought I'd find out how many of ye there was," muttered Jeremiah. "I know ye now. Yer name's legion, like them painted fellows that got into a lot of pigs once, in the Bible. Hold on there! What ye up to neow? Gum! Give me yer gun quick, Jairus!"

Jeremiah's exclamation had been called forth by the antics of the Indian at whom he had fired. For a moment he had appeared to hesitate, but only for a moment, as he darted from behind the tree which

stood a little apart from the others to return to his companions. Evidently he thought he would have time to do this before another gun in the sheep-pen could be discharged.

He had taken but a few steps, however, when he was thrown violently to the ground. Uttering a yell which caused even Jeremiah to lower his gun and gaze at him in surprise, he partially arose and then began to struggle desperately at something which plainly was holding him by the leg.

"Gum!" was all that Jeremiah could say at first. "Gum! He's got it neow, but what it is he's got is more'n I can say. 'Pears like as if somethin', though, had got him."

"I know what's got him! It's that wolf-trap we boys set for the panther. He's stepped straight into it. I hadn't thought of it once since we left it," said Jairus quickly.

"Let him work at it, then! Let him work at it!" said Jeremiah grimly. "I thought at first I'd pick him off same as I do a turkey that's held by a string at a shootin'-match, but I'll let him work at it alone. Mebbe he'll serve as a decoy to call some o' his heathing brethring to his aid. Shut up, can't ye? What's the good o' talkin' so loud! Ye'll disturb some o' the nabors, ye painted heathing!"

These last remarks of Jeremiah's were directed at the Indian, who was struggling desperately to open the jaws of the trap; but struggle and strive as he would, the strong trap still held him. He

called to his companions, and screamed in his pain. He hobbled to the end of the chain and tried to unfasten that, but his efforts were all without avail.

Still no one of his companions came to his aid, not caring to expose themselves in the open space to a shot from the sheep-pen. For several minutes the Indian struggled desperately to free himself, but at last concluding that no help would come to him, he cast himself upon the ground and lay still.

The pain caused by the trap was more easily borne than that which a bullet from a gun in the sheep-pen might cause, and heroically the Indian resigned himself to his fate.

"That's a fearful trap," said Jairus. "It took two of us to set it, and I don't wonder he can't get out of it alone. I shouldn't be surprised if his leg was broken, too."

"Like enough. But I tell ye what, Jairus, we're in a trap, too. That ere sun isn't goin' to stay up there in the sky fer us or anybody else, and when it's gone, I tell ye, we'll 'most envy that fellow out there in that wolf-trap."

"Why! what do you mean?" said Jairus quickly.

"Jest what I say. This pen'll be a trap, a death-trap, too, afore mornin', fer both of us. They'll creep up and set fire to it, and then where'll we be?"

"You don't think they'll do that, do you? Maybe Arthur's there, and bad as he is, he wouldn't go in for burning us alive."

"Mighty little Arthur'll have to do with it," replied Jeremiah. "I know them fellows better'n you, nor Arthur either. We've got to get out o' this, that's all there is to it."

"But how shall we get out? We can't open the door, can we?"

"Naw — though I guess I will, jest to see what'll take place. Kind o' let 'em know we're alive. Mebbe that's jest what they're a waitin' for all this time."

Jeremiah carefully removed the braces and bars from the door, and then, taking his hat and placing it on the end of a stick, he took his position at one side, and motioned to Jairus to open the door a few inches.

His companion, at once perceiving his object, took his stand behind the heavy door, and began to open it. As it swung slowly back, Jeremiah carefully thrust forward the hat on the end of the stick.

At the very first of its appearance there was a yell, and the discharge of a half-dozen guns. The bullets struck the heavy door, and knocked the hat from its position.

"Don't! Don't look out!" said Jeremiah quickly, for his companion had started to peer out into the forest. "They're waitin' for ye. Quick! Bar the door again. Bar it, I say!"

A band of Indians had appeared on the border as if they were about to make a rush upon the sheep-

pen, but Jairus hastily swung the heavy door into its place, and the bars and braces were immediately adjusted.

"There, I jest wanted to draw 'em out, and I did," said Jeremiah calmly. "Here, they've done more'n I bargained for," he quickly added, as, peering out again between the chinks, he saw the Indians with the body of their helpless companion withdrawing into the forest. "They've got that fellow, sure's you live, Jairus. That was a mistake, but they'll be on the lookout pretty sharp fer us, fer they'll suspect we don't mean to tarry but a night here. And we don't, or we'll think that poor redskin in the wolf-trap was in paradise alongside o' either of us."

"But what can we do? I don't see, for my part, that we can get out anywhere else, and they'll be on the watch, too."

"They'll be more'n on the watch, my son. This ere air's a little chilly in the night, and they'll want to have a fire to warm themselves by. And they'll have it, too. When it gets dark enough, some o' them tormentors will creep up here, and this pen'll somehow get afire, jest as yer house did, only this time there'll be somebody inside, which there wasn't in the other case, I'm a thinkin'."

"I'll do anything you say," said Jairus soberly, "but I don't see anything we can do."

"I'll show ye. Neow it won't do to try to go out by the door. They'll watch that constant like.

Can't we get out by the roof, or rip out a log on the back side o' this trap?"

"There was one of the logs that didn't fit in very well, but we chinked it up so it was safe enough," replied Jairus. "It's on the back side, there," and he pointed as he spoke to a place in the rear wall.

"That's the thing. Neow all I want o' ye, is to keep watch in front, and I'll fix that ere log. Fire off yer gun once in a while, jest to let 'em know we're alive, and watchin' that side o' the earth. Neow then!"

Jeremiah drew a huge jack-knife from his pocket, and, leaving his companion, at once began his task. Jairus could not hear him, for he worked silently, and the lad soon was giving his entire attention to the duty assigned him.

Not an Indian had appeared, but several times Jairus discharged his gun through the chinks in the wall, and the derisive shout which greeted him showed clearly that the besiegers had not departed.

Meanwhile the sun sank lower and lower, and at last disappeared below the edge of the forest. The dusk would soon be here and then the darkness. Thoughts of his missing mother, of the burned home, and of his brother in the British camp crowded themselves into his mind. And above all was the desperate situation in which he and his companion were placed.

"I've fixed it. I've had to be mighty quiet about

it, fer I didn't know what might be a listenin' to me. As soon as it's dark, we'll slip it out and start."

"Maybe we won't go far," said Jairus gloomily.

"Don't want to go far. Jest far enough's about right. Neow don't give up when the pinch comes. Yer too brave a lad to do that, I know!"

"No, I'm ready."

"'Tisn't quite dark enough yet. I'll sit down here beside ye and help keep watch."

As the darkness deepened, occasionally a gun was discharged, but no response was made now.

"They're jest a waitin' fer bus'ness," said Jeremiah; but his companion made no response. He was trembling with excitement, and the fear of the venture they were about to make prevented him from speaking.

The outlines of the forest became dim. There was a sighing now among the trees, for the wind was rising. For some time no response had come from the besiegers, and there was nothing to indicate the presence of danger. Jairus could not see the face of his companion now and knew of his presence only as he stretched forth his hand and touched him.

It seemed to him that hours must have passed, but Jeremiah had not spoken a word nor changed his position. It was becoming almost unbearable. The darkness, the silence and suspense, the fear of that which they were about to attempt, all rested heavily on the waiting boy; and Jeremiah had not

moved or spoken for hours as it seemed to him.

At last Jeremiah whispered, "The time's come, my lad. Neow, be brave. Come on!" Together they sought the rear of the pen, then, halting a moment, Jeremiah whispered, "I'll take out the log and go ahead. Then you follow me."

Stooping low, he slowly and silently pulled at the log. Jairus could see rather than hear that it yielded. In a moment Jeremiah slipped through the opening, and with trembling heart Jairus prepared to follow him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DIFFICULTIES ARE INCREASED.

THE darkness was so intense that when Jairus crept through the opening and found himself beside his companion, he could not even see his face. He knew he was by his side, however; for Jeremiah laid his hand gently on the shoulder of the lad, and for several minutes they stood together and waited.

Not a sound could be heard but the rustling of the leaves in the trees, that came close up to the rear of the sheep-pen. The besieging party had not been heard from since the darkness had come, but both of the men were too well versed in Indian ways to think for a moment that they had departed.

The custom of the savages was to wait until it was almost morning, when the watchers would be worn out by their vigil, or less on their guard, before they made a rush, or began an open attack. In the present case, however, both Jeremiah and Jairus strongly suspected that the Indians were led by their white allies, and if that should be true, the whole method of attack might be modified, or radically changed.

While they had not seen or heard of any of the besiegers except in the portion of the forest in front of the sheep-pen, for the only entrance was there, the rear of the place they were now leaving might have become the point of attack since the night had fallen, and in such an event their every movement might now be watched by their foes.

The thought made both more cautious, but when several moments had passed and no sound, save that of the rustling leaves, had been heard, Jeremiah indicated his desire to push on, by a gentle pull at Jairus's arm. The darkness was not so dense now, as their eyes in a measure had become accustomed to it, and the grim forms of the silent trees became more clearly defined.

Without delaying to restore the log they had removed to its place, Jairus began to move silently and slowly into the forest; for he knew that, as he was the more familiar with the region, upon him would devolve the duty of being the guide.

Cautiously and slowly they moved on, keeping well together, and their hearts at times almost ceasing to beat in their excitement.

Behind any of the great trees an Indian might be concealed. The eyes of an unseen enemy might be following their every movement. Jairus did not take a step that he did not fear a tomahawk or a bullet might meet him. Never before had he passed through such an experience.

In spite of his fears, he held steadily to his way.

Around behind the place where the old house had stood, they went; for he feared to approach the open space, as he thought some one might be watching there.

Their eyes had become more accustomed to the darkness now, and they had little difficulty in finding their way. From tree to tree they moved, working under such a strain of fear and anxiety as neither ever had known before.

It seemed to Jairus that hours must have passed since they left the sheep-pen. There were times when it all seemed unreal and he felt as if he had been dreaming, and was waiting for some one to rouse him out of his sleep. Still, they held to their way, working cautiously and slowly towards the shore of the lake, where they had left the little canoe, which Jairus had taken from the Panther at the time of his escape.

At last they arrived at a spot from which they could look out into the open space where the log house had been, and Jairus stopped for a moment, and, taking his companion by the hand, gazed earnestly at the familiar spot.

How changed it all was! The ashes alone marked the ruins of the home, and appeared almost ghost-like in the night. Not a sound could be heard, however, and in a moment Jeremiah indicated by a gentle pressure of the hand that they must go on.

With a sigh, which he could not entirely repress, Jairus resumed his efforts, and slowly they withdrew

from the spot and again started towards the shore of the lake.

There was a lump in his throat which he could not swallow. The vision of his mother rose before him just as she had stood in the doorway when the boys started forth on their search for the dead panther's mate. And now his mother was gone, the home was burned, the sheep slaughtered, and Samuel was in the British camp.

He felt as if he could not leave the spot without some word from his mother. Was she living or dead? Had she escaped from the house, and was she even now wandering somewhere in the forest?

The mournful hooting of an owl, overhead, almost made Jairus turn back, it came to him so unexpectedly. Was he trying to escape from his duty? Ought he to remain and make a further search for the missing woman?

Perhaps his footsteps faltered, or he disclosed his feelings in some manner, for Jeremiah stopped and whispered: "We'll keep on to the shore, my lad, and when we're once there we'll talk it over, and see what's the very best thing to try. Keep on neow, though, or we'll never be able to do anythin' fer ye, or fer yer mother, either."

Jairus made no reply, but the determined manner in which he resumed his labors clearly showed that his hesitation was gone, and that all his powers would be concentrated upon the work immediately before them.

Both Jeremiah and Jairus were practised woodsmen, and the forest had few secrets for them. Confidently they went on now, for no signs had been seen that their escape had been discovered. Indeed, the prevailing silence seemed to be deeper than before, and for several minutes they increased their speed, and at last stood on the summit of a little knoll from which, through the open spaces between the trees of the forest, they could catch little glimmerings of the lake, which was now not far distant.

Here they halted for a breathing spell. Both were well satisfied that they were not being pursued, and the little birch-bark canoe lay not many yards away.

"Now, Jairus," whispered Jeremiah, "yer mother's got away long afore this, or else she's where ye can't help her."

Jairus shuddered slightly as he replied, "I'm afraid it's so — I'm afraid it's so. Still I think I'd better wait here a day or two, and let you go back to Ty. You're needed there, and I'm needed here. The Indians will be gone in a day or two, and if Arthur Goodwin was with them, he'll know what's become of my mother."

"Yes, but what'll ye do? How'll ye find out from him?"

"I'll go back into Burgoyne's camp."

"And tell the Panther and David Jones ye've come back to take yer medicine like a good little

man? They'll want to know where you've been, and you won't need to tell 'em, either. You know what a good time Nathan Hale had, don't you?"

"Yes, the British hung him after the battle of Long Island."

"And you want to go and do likewise, do you? I'm surprised at you, I am, indeed."

"But what can I do, Jeremiah? You wouldn't want me to run away and leave my mother here for these redcoats and redskins, would you? Sam's where he can't be of any use to her, and if mother's anywhere around here, I ought to help her out."

"Yes, by placing yourself jest where Sam is; that is, if you're lucky enough to get past all these varmints in the woods, which, as my humble opinion is, you'd never do."

"What can I do, then?" persisted the troubled boy. "I can't go away with the possibility that she's lost somewhere around here, and no one to help her."

"No more you can't, my lad," replied Jeremiah soberly. "Neow jest let's look at the facts a minit, jest as they be. First of all, your house is gone."

"Yes, and my mother's gone, too," interrupted Jairus.

"Jest hold on a bit, till we git all the facts, for facts is what we want. The house is gone, as I said. Neow heow did it go? By fire. Heow did the fire start? Some one set it, most likely. Who's most likely to set it? Who'd know the most about

your bein' likely to come back to this 'ere place? Who'd be on the lookout for you? Tell me that, will you?"

"Probably Arthur Goodwin."

"Right, my son, right. Neow Arthur Goodwin's the son o' his pa, which means a good deal. He'd burn your very heouse up, but he's been a visitin' here fer a month er two. Neow tell me, do ye honestly think he'd harm your ma? Would he?"

"No. I don't think he would. He hates us boys, but I can't believe he would willingly see any harm come to my mother."

"That's sense. Well, Arthur Goodwin had somethin' to do with that 'ere fire. But he'd look out fer your ma. He'd take her to the British camp, where there's lots o' good women, I'm told, or else he'd report to Sam, who's there now and in a good deal better shape to keep her than you'd be if you was seen there. You'd be strung up, or else the Panther would get after you, and either of them things is worse than the other. But my humble opinion is that you'd never live to see your ma, or Sam, or the camp. There's somethin' atween here and there which will stand in the way o' that."

As Jairus still hesitated, Jeremiah continued: "And then your ma can do some things fer herself. I know her, and she won't give in in a minit. No, sir. She can take care o' herself if anybody can, and while she may have a hard rub of it, you mark my words, what she wants o' you

jest at the present time is to leave her to herself and Sam. You'll make matters a good deal worse by tryin' to put your finger in the pie. If she was here, she'd be a sayin', 'Jeremiah Thatcher talks sense. He allus talks sense, and Jairus, my boy, you go along with him and mind your bis'ness, and I'll mind mine.'"

Jairus still hesitated. He could not bring himself to the thought of what to him seemed like the desertion of his mother; and yet he knew there was sound sense in much that his companion had said. He would, in all likelihood, be taken by the Indians, or regarded in no friendly light by the British, if he were so fortunate as to be able to return to Burgoyne's camp.

The immediate decision was made for him, however, and in an unexpected manner; for, while he was hesitating, Jeremiah suddenly grasped his arm and said, "Look there! Look there! will you? There's the sheep-pen goin' up in the air."

Jairus turned quickly and glanced behind him in the direction indicated by his companion. Far away, as it seemed, a dull glow appeared above the outlines of the forest. Even while he looked, the glow increased, and darting flames could be seen leaping towards the sky.

"It's the sheep-pen! It is the sheep-pen!" he said hurriedly.

"In course it's the sheep-pen," replied Jeremiah. "The rascals have probably crept up and shot some

burnin' arrows into it, or set fire to it close to the ground. Jest as like as not they're a hangin' round waitin' for us to come out and be caught, the way a boy does when he drowns out a woodchuck. There! hear that yell, will you! That's what you'd get if you only hung around here long enough, and you wouldn't hear it long, either. No, sir! I tell you we crawled out jest in the nick o' time!"

Jairus listened, and it did seem as if he could hear the sound of distant shouts. Perhaps it was his imagination, he thought, but there was no deception about the fire. The glow steadily increased, and each moment the flames seemed to dart higher and higher. The sheep-pen was burning and the besiegers either were waiting for them to come forth and surrender, or had already discovered the means by which they had made their escape. In the latter case, it might be that they were already in pursuit, while they were stupidly waiting for them to come near.

As if to give added force to the last suggestion, Jeremiah suddenly whispered, "Hark! I thought I heard somethin'. Come on, Jairus! This is no place for us to be a waitin' in. Let's make for that canoe!"

Jairus instantly followed his companion as he swiftly made his way down to the shore. As they ran, it seemed to them as if multitudes were in pursuit. Over the fallen logs, through the rough bushes, they made their way, not even stopping to

glance behind them. Even Jeremiah's customary prudence had apparently been cast aside in his eagerness to gain possession of the birch-bark canoe, and seek the shelter which the darkness and the lake together might offer.

Jeremiah was the first to gain the shore, but Jairus was close behind, and as he approached he was startled by a sudden exclamation of his companion: —

"Gum!"

"What is it, Jeremiah?"

"The canoe's gone."

Jairus quickly looked in the place where the canoe had been hidden. A brief investigation confirmed the truth of Jeremiah's words. The canoe was indeed gone; and rising from his knees, his heart filled now with the thought of a new fear, Jairus turned and looked at his companion in the dim light on the shore.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FALL OF THE OLD FORT.

It was from Crown Point that General Burgoyne had sent forth his pompous proclamation, to which we have already referred. The few Americans who had formed the garrison there had quickly abandoned the fort and retreated to Ticonderoga on the approach of the British.

The invading army had at once taken possession of the place and made arrangements to establish a hospital there, although in their confidence they expected there would be but a slight need for any such institution. A magazine and stores were also provided before the army began its operations against the more formidable fort at Ticonderoga.

All were confident, and the fact that no resistance had been made at Crown Point gave them the impression that they would meet with slight opposition on their onward march.

The division in which Samuel Goodwin unfortunately found himself was under the command of General Fraser, who, next to Burgoyne, was looked upon as the ablest general in the British army.

Some light infantry, grenadiers, Canadians, and Indians made up the bulk of the division, and they had ten pieces of light artillery with which to enforce any demands they might make upon the confused and frightened Americans.

They had encamped at the mouth of Putnam's creek on the west side of the lake, and then moved up to Four Mile Point, which, as its name suggested, was only four miles from Fort Ticonderoga, the first important place to be gained by Burgoyne's army.

The Hessians, at the same time when General Fraser began to move, advanced along the eastern shore under the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel Brayman, while all the remainder of the army, of which General John Burgoyne himself had command, were on board the gunboats, the frigates, and the *Royal George*, and over the water had moved up between the two divisions on the shores.

When the forces on the land halted, the boats came to anchor just out of the range of the cannon of the fort.

The scouts soon brought the British general information that Sugar Loaf Hill (later called Mount Defiance) and Mount Hope (said to have been so called by the British because of the "hope" it gave them of an easy and speedy advance) had been left without guards by the Americans, and Burgoyne was not long in deciding that these were the very positions he wanted for himself, and so prepared at once to gain possession of them.

Mount Independence was in reality the strong garrison of the Americans. It was stronger than Ticonderoga, and much better supplied with provisions. Batteries guarded its approaches, and it was fairly well supplied with artillery. There was also a strong abatis next to the water, and on the northwestern side the foot of the hill was strongly entrenched. From the entrenchments great cannon pointed down the lake, and were ready to challenge the approach of any foe; and near the point, by the mouth of East creek, there was a great circular battery.

All these defences were comparatively strong; but, as we know, the men were not well equipped, and clothing, ammunition, and food, to say nothing of reinforcements when they should be needed, were sadly wanting.

Nor were there men enough to look well to the lines. Nine hundred of them were militia, and it is said that not one in ten had bayonets for their guns; while the two thousand five hundred and forty-six Continentals were not in a much better condition, so negligent had Congress been.

It was on the 2d of July, 1777, when the right wing of the British moved forward and the Americans prepared to resist what they believed and hoped would be a direct attack upon the fort.

If General St. Clair could only have chosen the method by which the British would attack him, he might have made a successful resistance; but unfort-

unately the enemy selected their own plans in place of his, and as a consequence the Americans suffered far more than a mere disappointment, as we shall soon see.

The outlying Americans made but a feeble resistance, and soon abandoned the outposts, although they endeavored to set fire to them before they withdrew. The bold rocky crag, six hundred feet above the clear waters of the lakes, was soon in possession of the enemy, and they at once prepared to follow up the advantage in a manner wholly unexpected by the defenders of Ticonderoga.

None of the Americans had believed this place could be occupied by the British. They knew, it is true, that if artillery could only be planted there, it would drive them from every place they held. They had been warned repeatedly of the danger, but not deeming it possible that cannon could be dragged up its steep and rocky slopes, they had given the matter little thought.

The British engineer, Lieutenant Twiss, studied it carefully, however, and reported what he had discovered to the British generals, Fraser and Phillips.

The latter officer was a man of quick decision and prompt action, and declared that "Where a goat can go, a man can go; and where a man can go, he can haul a cannon."

There was a deep defile, which shielded the British from the view of the garrison, and Phillips's men at once began to work night and day in

breaking a pathway, and hauling up the heavy cannon.

They worked, we are told, "like beavers," or as beavers are said to work, without cessation; and we can well imagine the surprise and consternation of the Americans when in the early morning light of the 5th of July, 1777, they looked up to the crag, which General Fraser in his confidence had now named Mount Defiance, and saw it swarming with the red-coated enemy.

And something besides men was there, too. Great cannon looked down upon the fort, and there was not a place within the garrison which they could not sweep. Every man could be counted by the enemy on the heights, and every movement could be plainly seen. Something must be done, and at once.

General St. Clair, greatly chagrined and disturbed, we may be sure, hastily called a council of his officers and began to discuss what was best to be done; but in whichever way they turned their eyes, they withdrew them again, to gaze at that terrible sight on the height above.

They might fight. Men always can do that, but there is slight advantage to be gained by fighting, unless there is something worth fighting for. There were not soldiers enough to man the defences well, and when the action began, it would be necessary to work night and day, and all the time they would be exposed to the terrible fire

of those awful guns gazing down at them from above.

Nor could any aid reasonably be expected from without. General Schuyler was at Fort Edward, but he did not have enough men in his command to permit him to send any for the relief of the fort, and, besides, it would be almost impossible to get word to him in time.

Within the space of another day the British would have their work completed. It was impossible to dislodge them now, and as soon as their work should be completed, then all they would have to do would be to shoot down upon the defenceless men, and demolish their defences at their leisure.

General St. Clair was a brave man. No one to-day doubts that, but he had made the mistake of not preparing for this very emergency. Great as his mistake was, however, that of Congress had been greater, and by their neglect and delay in providing men and supplies, they had left the little garrison in a terrible plight. He could remain and fight, but the end would be that both his men and his fort would be lost.

On the other hand, he might withdraw his forces, and while he could not save Ticonderoga, he might be able to save his men. He knew he would be misjudged and blamed, but at last he arrived at a decision. It was better to suffer himself than to permit his men to remain for certain destruction,

and like the brave man that he was, he calmly and decidedly gave it as his opinion that the place should be evacuated.

His proposal was at once agreed to. The cannon which could not be moved were to be spiked, and so rendered useless for the invaders. Each soldier was to provide himself with provisions for several days, the lights were to be put out before the tents were struck, and to make the British believe that they were intending to try to defend the fort, a continuous firing from the battery nearest Mount Hope was to be kept up; and then in the night they were all silently to withdraw and abandon the place.

Of course there was great consternation and confusion in the American camp. Fears of an immediate attack made the men timid, and not all the orders were understood. It had been arranged to place all the baggage and stores that could be collected on board of two hundred bateaux and send them up to Skenesborough (Whitehall) under the protection of five armed galleys, while the army was to proceed by land, marching by the way of Castleton to the same place.

It had also been planned not to let the men know of the movement until after the evening orders had been given; but the project could not entirely be kept secret, and alarm and confusion at once followed.

At about two o'clock in the morning the evacua-

tion was begun. There was a full moon, but it was hoped the light would not be sufficient to enable the British to see their movements. Careful orders had been given as to the lights, and all the camp-fires had been extinguished.

Only an hour after the movement began, a house caught fire. Some say that General de Fermoy, regardless of orders, was to be blamed for this, and that as soon as his troops left, he kindled the blaze himself. Others, however, say that it was purely a matter of accident, and that in the haste and confusion of the departure it was all the result of carelessness.

Whatever the cause, the building was soon in flames, and in the light it afforded, the British sentinels caught a glimpse of the last body of men just as they left the fort and disappeared from sight within the dark shadows of the forest.

The alarm guns of the sentinels at once informed the invaders of the action of the Americans, and the fact that they knew their retreat had been discovered greatly increased the confusion and alarm among the departing troops.

Scarcely an hour had passed, and the sun was just beginning to appear above the eastern hills, when General Fraser's men raised the British flag over old Fort Ticonderoga, which now for the third time in its history passed into the possession of an enemy without a drop of blood having been shed.

In 1759 the English under General Amherst

had captured it without the loss of a man; in 1775 Colonel Ethan Allen had led the New England provincials against it and gained possession without a gun having been fired. And now for the third time it fell in a similar manner into the possession of General John Burgoyne.

But the British this time were not satisfied with the mere fact of possession. General Fraser with nine hundred men, among whom were Lieutenant David Jones and the unwilling private Samuel Goodwin, started in swift pursuit of the retreating Americans. The Baron de Riedesel was soon sent to support Fraser, while General Burgoyne, after leaving about a thousand men to garrison the fort which had fallen so easily into his hands, started up the lake with the main body of his confident and victorious army.

The Americans had made a strong boom at Ticonderoga, and thought that pursuit by water would be almost impossible; but long before noon the eager British had made an opening and cleared the way, and their flotilla, crowding on all sail, started after the two hundred bateaux on which so much of the baggage and stores of the retreating Americans had been placed. And so successful were the British, that before the sun set all these stores had been destroyed.

General Fraser's division, meanwhile, was in swift pursuit of the Americans, who were retreating among the Green Hills, and were confident that

they would soon overtake the fleeing and demoralized men.

In spite of all his watchfulness, Samuel Goodwin had not found an opportunity to escape from the British army. Here he was in hot pursuit of his own countrymen, and his heart was heavy when he thought of the misfortunes which already had befallen them, and of the worse disasters which he feared might yet be in store.

"Fine body, that of St. Clair's!" laughed Lieutenant David as for a time he marched beside Samuel. "They fight like a flock of ducks. It won't be possible soon to find a feather. I shouldn't be surprised if by the time we get to Hubbardton there wouldn't be a man left in the American army."

Samuel made no reply, and indeed it seemed to him just then that there was no reply to be made. He was discouraged and disheartened, and the taunts of David apparently rested on a true foundation. Still he was not entirely in despair. He carefully tried to conceal his real feelings, well knowing that after Jairus's escape his own actions would be carefully watched.

The victorious army took but little time for halts or rest. They were all eager now to follow up their successful work and, by striking one quick blow, at the same time destroy St. Clair's army and open up the way for the union of Burgoyne's army with that of Sir Henry Clinton's, and so divide and practically destroy the confederacy and rebellion.

On the morning of the 7th of July General Fraser's army was within sight of the retreating Americans at Hubbardton, and with a heavy heart Samuel Goodwin realized that another engagement was about to take place, and that before it was ended he doubtless would see many of his own countrymen fall. And he must do his share in the battle.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BOLD YOUNG SERGEANT.

THE thoughts of the trembling young soldier were recalled from the scene before him by some one touching him upon the arm. Turning about, he saw standing before him a red-coated soldier not much older than he, who was gazing curiously at him.

"Is this young Goodwin?" the stranger asked after the pause of a moment.

"That's my name," replied Samuel, returning the glance. "What do you want of me?"

He tried to speak as if he were not concerned by the unexpected salutation, but in spite of all his efforts his cheeks became pale as he thought of a possible detection now. Even the excitement of the approaching engagement was forgotten for the moment, and he began to picture the troubles into which he might be led. Perhaps it was now known who he was, and the British might think he was there to obtain information for the other side.

All sorts of conjectures were passing rapidly through his mind. It was distasteful, this passing

even in the army of the enemy for some one he was not, but up to this time he had never considered his position as an especially dangerous one.

Troubled as he was, he was hardly prepared for the reply of the young sergeant, for such he proved to be, when he said: —

"You're to come with me. I've a letter from your father."

"A letter from my father!" said the astonished Samuel. "Why, my father's —"

In a moment he recovered himself and stopped abruptly. He had been about to explain that his father was dead, when he suddenly bethought himself and waited for the stranger to go on. It might be better to let another speak rather than talk too much himself.

"Yes, yes, I know," said the young sergeant quickly. "He's up at St. John's, and you had no thought of a word from him. That's all right, my boy, that's all right."

Samuel kept himself from smiling at the fatherly air of the young officer, who could not be more than two or three years older than he. He only turned aside his head and pretended to be watching the lines in front of him, and his companion went on without perceiving the effect of his words upon the young soldier.

"No, I don't think you expected a message from him, but it's come. He's written us" (the young sergeant seemed to take an especial delight in rolling

out the word "us") "that he has another good-sized band of loyalists to forward to us. We'll take 'em all right, though it isn't likely we shall need any more men, judging from what has happened lately. The Yankees ran out of old Ty like rats from a hole when you pour water into it, and they seem to have been able to keep up a fairly good rate of speed ever since."

He glanced forward as he spoke at the preparations which were going on for the engagement.

"What do you want of me, then?" inquired Samuel.

"Oh, we think we'll take the men. All good loyalists are always welcome in our camp. But just now we want to look after supplies even more than we do men; so the general thinks, and I agree with him, that we'd better send your father word to that effect. Probably we shan't want them long, for this whole thing will be over in a few days now; but it's well enough to look to your supplies at any time. So I've thought it a good thing to take you and go up to see your father and explain the whole matter to him. I'm sorry to miss the fun here. Indeed, I am!"

The manifest pride of the sergeant was all lost on Samuel, who was trying to think his way out of the new complications in which he found himself. It was plain that he had been mistaken for his cousin Arthur, and at first he had felt inclined to set himself right in that particular; but it instantly occurred

to him that here was an opportunity which he might turn to his own advantage. If he did not inform the sergeant of his mistake, he doubtless would leave the army with him, and somewhere before they arrived at St. John's he might be able to find a way out of his difficulties. If not, he knew the prospect when he should stand before his uncle would not be very bright for him; for the hatred with which he and all his immediate family were regarded was only too well known by him.

"You'd better go with him, Sam," said Lieutenant David, who had thought the momentary silence of his companion was due to his desire to remain with the army. "This is only going to be a little brush with the Yankees. One volley will be all they'll want or stand. If they ran out of old Ty without a gun being fired, what will they do when they hear so many go off at once? I'd go with him."

"Of course he'll go with me," said the young sergeant pompously. "Haven't I just told him that was what I came here for? I've had a great time finding him, too; but it'll be all right now. Of course he'll go. He hasn't anything to say about that."

"When do we start?" asked Samuel, again to all appearances ignoring the manner of the conceited young officer before him.

"We go now. We'll start at once, if you please. We're in a hurry to get this word to your father, and

I am in just as great a hurry to get back to the army. I may be needed."

"You surely will be," said Samuel quickly. "I don't just see how General Fraser will get along without you. Why don't you just send me alone? I can do the work, and you'll be missed here."

Samuel spoke eagerly, too eagerly, he feared, when he stopped and noticed David looking keenly at him.

"Oh, they'll have to get along as best they can without me," said the sergeant, apparently not perceiving anything implied or concealed in Samuel's words. "It won't take us long to run down the lake, and we'll soon have it all fixed and be back in the ranks again. I can't let you go alone, my boy. The errand's too important to be trusted to any but experienced men. But you can help me, my boy; you can help me, and it may prove in the end to be a good thing for you, too. I certainly shall do all in my power to aid you if you prove to be as good a fellow as I hope you are. Come on; we'll start now."

"Good by, then, Lieutenant," said Samuel, turning to his late companion. "I hope we shan't be gone long. I suppose we're to keep our guns, aren't we?" he added, turning again to the sergeant.

"Certainly, though there won't be anything the length of Champlain to draw a shot. Come on, now. We've got to trudge it out to the lake."

Samuel started obediently, wondering at the

eagerness of his companion to depart. They walked rapidly along the rough road and had not gone far before the sound of shots behind them began to be heard.

"There, they're at it!" said Samuel, stopping for a moment, and listening to the distant roar which each moment grew louder.

"Yes, yes," replied the sergeant, "but we must hurry. We've lost too much time already. Why, do you know I almost came to believe that there was no such fellow in all the army as Arthur Goodwin, it seemed to be so difficult to find him!"

The young sergeant spoke rapidly, and there was a strange light in his eyes which Samuel suspected was not born alone of his desire to do the errand on which they had started. His suspicions were increased as the sergeant broke into a run, glancing quickly behind him at frequent intervals, as if he feared the tide of the battle might turn towards them.

Samuel was wise enough to keep his thoughts to himself, however, and followed his companion until soon the sounds of the distant engagement became fainter and fainter, and at last no longer could be heard.

"One volley didn't seem to scatter the Yankees this time, if we can judge from the way the racket is kept up," he said at last, when his breathless companion appeared to be willing to abandon the swift pace they had taken.

"Pooh! probably the regulars made them run at the first fire, and have been chasing them ever since. I should think so from the sounds we heard. They seemed to be farther away all the time."

"Or we were farther from the sounds, I don't know which," remarked Samuel dryly.

"That's all right," replied the sergeant. "We've kept up a pretty good pace, for I'm in a hurry to get back, you know. If we keep this up, we'll be back in good season, though I'm afraid the whole of Burgoyne's army will be so far away by that time, chasing these Yankees, that we'll have to make quite a long trip to catch up with them. If Sir Henry wasn't coming up the Hudson to meet us, I verily believe we'd chase these rebels right down to York, and they'd jump right off into the ocean of their own accord. But there's one comfort, we'd jump right off after 'em. That's just what every one of us would do!"

"That's what we seem to be doing just at present," said Samuel soberly.

"We're helping the good work on," replied the sergeant cheerfully. The fact that the guns could no longer be heard appeared to have had a very marked effect on his spirits. "Now, I want to tell you, young Goodwin, that I shan't stand on my dignity while we're together on this trip. Of course when we get back into the ranks again, I shall expect you to address me as Sergeant Richmond. Even General Fraser won't let his warmest friends call

him by his first name, and while General Burgoyne is called 'John' and 'Johnnie' by some of the men, I don't believe he likes it. I shouldn't, I know. Still, I don't mind it when we're off together like this, and I'll just call you Arthur, and you can call me Tom if you like. Mind you, it's only while we're off on this trip, you know. I don't want to put on airs, that's against my principles, and I don't want you to feel that you can't talk to me as you would to any other man, you know."

"Thank you," replied Samuel, looking soberly at his companion as he spoke.

"It's about time we had something to eat," continued Sergeant Tom. "I've got directions where to go. You see, there are some true royalists all along the shore here, and they know how to treat His Majesty's officers, too. Yes, I rather think this is the very place where we are to stop," he added, as he saw a low house at the fork in the road before them. "Now mind, you'll have to keep up appearances here, and call me Sergeant, you know, so long as we are in the house. After we go on, it will be all right enough to speak of Tom, but not here."

Samuel promised to regard the position and dignity of his companion, and the boys soon turned into the yard adjoining the house. The young sergeant's words seemed to produce the desired effect, for a hearty breakfast was soon disposed of by each of them.

As soon as this was finished, Tom pompously

drew forth his wallet and paid their hostess, and then they resumed their journey.

"There's a little cat-boat we're to have," said Tom. "I don't know whether I told you or not, but I know just where it is, and it's all stocked up for us, too, or it will be as soon as we get there. I've the orders in my pocket, you know," and he slapped his side as he spoke. "I think we'll manage somehow to get a little fun out of it, and there'll be no chance for a rebel gun to do us any damage, either, as the lake's swept pretty clear now of all such truck as that. Not that I'm afraid of any gun a rebel ever carried," he added quickly, apparently fearful that his words might leave the impression on his companion's mind that he was glad to be away from the army. "They don't seem to do much damage, you know. In fact, they don't ever seem to stop long enough, those cowardly Yankees, even to hold a gun to their shoulders a minute."

Samuel made no reply, though he was satisfied that the guns they had heard had not all been discharged by one side. But his heart was heavy when he thought of the fleeing army. After all, what hope was there that the Continentals could ever make a successful stand against the well-equipped and well-trained forces of General Burgoyne? Must it all end in defeat and loss? Such misfortunes as had recently befallen them could not go on forever, and what the end was to be the down-hearted boy could not conjecture, and his heart was heavy within him.

Then, too, there were his mother and his brother. Where they were, or what had befallen them, he did not know; but his thoughts were busy with them all the time now. He seldom spoke to his companion, and when late in the afternoon the tired boys drew near the lake, Tom said: "There! There's the lake. Now didn't I tell you I'd bring you all safe and sound here? And haven't I kept my word? You can trust one of His Majesty's officers every time, my boy. Now the cat-boat's right below here, and we'll run down and see if she's all stocked up. I hope she is, for I'm tired out, and a sail on the lake is just what I want now. Come on!"

The boys ran eagerly down the shore in spite of their weariness, and in a little cove, which Tom seemed to know all about, they found the cat-boat, and stepped quickly on board.

"It's all right," said Tom gleefully. "It's all stocked up for us, and we've got enough stuff on board to last us a week. Cast off there, and we'll put straight across the lake; for I think we'll do better to follow the other shore."

Samuel followed the directions of the young officer, and in a few moments they drew away from the Vermont side, and started directly across the lake.

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

For a moment Jairus and Jeremiah gazed at each other in the dim light, while neither spoke. The disappearance of the canoe was certain, though how or where it had gone was a mystery. That it was gone, however, there was not the slightest doubt, and with it had also gone, as they thought, their sole means of escape from that dangerous region.

"Mebbe it's worked loose, and drifted somewhere along the beach," whispered Jeremiah at last. "You go one way and look, and I'll try the other, but come back here in five minutes at the longest."

Jairus instantly responded, and a hurried search was made along the shore, but no signs of the missing canoe could be found. The lad stopped and peered carefully out over the waters of the lake. Once he thought he saw the missing boat, but he soon discovered that what he had seen was the rock which rose above the surface between the spot where he was standing and the little island that lay about a quarter of a mile from the shore.

There was no help to be seen. The silent waters

stretched away before him, while behind him lay the unbroken forest. Under the gentle breeze which was blowing, its tall trees swayed and sighed, as if they partially understood the feelings of the hardy frontiersman. The hooting of the owl had ceased, and the very stillness of the night was oppressive.

Jairus was only dimly conscious of all these things, for he was determined to find the lost canoe if such a thing were possible; but they all combined to increase his feeling of desolation, when at last he started to return to the place he had left, where he was to await the coming of his companion.

He ran swiftly along the shore and soon saw Jeremiah approaching the meeting-place, but he perceived at once that his friend had met with no better success than had he.

"Didn't find it, did you, Jeremiah?" he whispered eagerly.

"Naw! Either the thing's broken loose and drifted away, or some pesky redskin's got it. He may have it neow somewhere up on the banks and be watching us all the time, for all I know. Hark! what was that?"

Above the murmuring of the forest arose a call which could not be mistaken. The Indians had left the sheep-pen and must be approaching the lake.

"What can we do, Jeremiah?" said Jairus hurriedly. "We've got to do something. Shall we make a break and go up, or shall we go down the shore?"

"Wait jest a minit," said Jeremiah. "You listen and I'll think."

"Oh, come on! Come on! Don't stop here! Let's make for the upper shore," said Jairus excitedly. "We mustn't stay here! We can't stay here! Come on, Jeremiah! Come on!"

As he spoke, Jairus started as if he were about to leave his companion and make for the forest.

But he was quickly recalled as Jeremiah said, "I have it, Jairus. I have it."

"Have what?"

"The way out. Those varmints must have stolen our canoe, and they'd know we made for it when they found we'd left the sheep-pen. Neow they'll make a circle and try to shut us in as they start for this very place."

"Come on, then. Let's not wait a single minute longer. Come on!" Jairus was in a state of great excitement, and mistook the coolness of his companion for indifference.

"In jest a minit, Jairus. Jest a minit. Sometimes the more haste the less speed. We've got to git our bearings first. Neow there's a island out here in the lake about a quarter of a mile away, isn't there?"

"Yes, but it won't do us any good without the canoe. We can't swim to it, or you can't, at least."

"No more am I goin' to try it, but we've got to make for it. They'll git us sure pop if we stay here."

"Then what are you staying for? We can't get to the island, and we mustn't stay here. Come on! Come on!"

Jairus was becoming desperate in his fear. Every moment he expected to hear the sound of a gun, or feel an arrow shot by some unseen enemy. Every tree might be the hiding-place of a foe, while every birch or fallen log seemed to him like the very presence of his enemies.

"Take off yer boots and carry them in yer hands," said Jeremiah quickly. "Don't make any more noise than ye can help, and follow me. I'll take ye on out o' this, yet."

Jairus instantly obeyed, although he could not understand Jeremiah's plan, and together they started down the lake, keeping close inshore, and wading through the shallow water.

It seemed to the lad like a meaningless work, and yet so strong was his confidence in his companion that he uttered no protest. Once or twice he stumbled and almost fell; for his eyes were constantly towards the forest, from which each moment he expected to see some of their enemies emerge.

"Careful! Careful!" whispered Jeremiah, and Jairus strove to follow the example of his companion, who was lifting his feet without making a sound as he walked rapidly onward.

For five minutes the strange flight was maintained, and then at a whispered word from Jeremiah both stopped and listened.

No sound but the murmuring of the night wind could be heard, and with a grunt of satisfaction, Jeremiah, in a low voice, said: "This is the place. Neow take hold with me and we'll lift a couple of these logs into the water. Don't make any noise, and be quick about it, too, for I don't think we've much time to waste."

As he spoke, Jeremiah advanced to a low pile of logs that were lying near the shore. Jairus instantly recalled them as some which he and his brother had cut in the preceding winter, intending to build a little dock there. He quickly obeyed his companion, however, and in a moment two of the logs had been removed from the pile and transferred to the lake.

"Neow, tie yer boots together and hang them over the log," said Jeremiah, quickly producing some thongs of deer's hide from his pockets and cutting them with his knife.

He handed one piece to Jairus, and with the other tied his own boots together and hung them across the log before him.

Jairus speedily followed his example, not yet understanding his friend's plan, but still trusting to his judgment.

"Neow, then," said Jeremiah, "we'll strike out with these 'ere logs and try to make for that island. I never could swim it, never in the world, but with this log I'll do it jest as easy as a boy paddles around a mill-pond. Don't make any noise, and

whatever else ye do, keep close to me. Ye'll git yer clothes wet, but that isn't worth mindin'; neow, then," and as he spoke he quickly pushed his log before him, and wading a few feet out into the lake until the water rose to his shoulders, began to swim, leaning upon the end of the log, and slowly pushing it before him.

Jairus was soon by his side, and together the two men swam on. The logs were not large, but were sufficient to bear their weight, and soon the men had passed from the shore, the line of which could now no longer be seen.

Behind them lay the dark forest, but no signs of their enemies had yet appeared. With their heads close to the water, even in the dim light they could see a considerable distance about them. Both were familiar with the location of the island they were seeking, but its outlines could not yet be discerned.

They had gone several hundred yards before they rested. Then, at a word from Jeremiah, both ceased from their labors for a moment, and looked behind them and listened. A pause of a moment served to show them that as yet none of their enemies were following them, and Jeremiah gave the word to resume their labors.

"Are you tired?" whispered Jairus. "Don't you want to rest a little longer?"

"Naw, not a bit," whispered Jeremiah. "There's only one thing that troubles me."

"What's that?"

"I'm wet, and this lake water isn't fit to swim in. I'd rather have a mill-pond any day."

Jairus was in no mood for joking, but the apparent indifference of his companion served to strengthen his own hopes, and with renewed courage he began to move again, striving all the time to keep close to his companion.

With all their efforts, their progress was necessarily slow, and several rests were taken before the outlines of the island appeared in the darkness before them. But at last it was seen, and then they slightly changed their course and drew near the shore.

"The other side, the other side," whispered Jeremiah. "We want to come in from the lake side, not from the shore. If any of those redskins should happen to get sight of these 'ere logs, he'd come over to see what they were for."

Jeremiah spoke with difficulty now, and Jairus could readily perceive that he was thoroughly chilled by the long swim; but they kept together, and circling the point, soon approached the island from the lake side.

Light was just beginning to appear in the east when the weary swimmers stepped on the shore. They quickly lifted the logs out of the water and concealed them under the bushes that grew near the bank. The island itself was covered with a low growth of trees, and promised to provide a shelter, at least for a time.

"We'll wring out our clothes, first," said Jeremiah, his teeth chattering as he spoke.

Their clothing was quickly removed, and by the united efforts of both, the garments were soon wrung comparatively dry. The sun had appeared by this time, and the July morning gave promise of being unusually warm. This was not lamented, however, by either of the men, for both of them were thoroughly chilled.

"We'll get no breakfast here," said Jairus dolefully.

"We'll get something better than that, we'll get ourselves," replied Jeremiah. "When you come to think of it, a breakfast doesn't count for much alongside gettin' out o' that pen of yours, and makin' our way through the woods, where the redskins are swarmin' like bees. No, sir, not much! We can afford to wait till to-morrow, or the day after if necessary, for a breakfast. We've saved our bacon, anyway, and there'll be time enough to cook it by and by."

Although they were tired by the exertions of the preceding night, they took several turns along the shore, and in the warm sunlight their clothing was soon dry, and the men were greatly refreshed.

"We'll go over on the other side now," said Jeremiah, "and see how it looks along the shore."

Jairus readily responded, but neither of them was prepared for the sight which greeted their eyes as they looked across the water which intervened be-

tween them and the New York side of the lake. Directly in front of them, at about half the distance to the mainland, six canoes could be seen moving rapidly up the lake.

"There's yer tormentors," said Jeremiah as he caught sight of the little fleet. "They're the fellows that set fire to yer pen and burned up yer house, Jairus. Gum! but it's too bad we had to leave our guns."

Jairus made no reply, for he was eagerly watching the departing canoes. He counted eighteen men, and several of them he was satisfied were white.

Jeremiah, as if reading his companion's thoughts, said: "It's jest as I calc'lated. See them white fellows! They're the lads who are at the bottom of all the mischief."

"Jeremiah," said Jairus hastily, "they're coming this way. They're coming here. You don't suppose they've got sight of us, do you?"

"Naw," responded Jeremiah quickly.

Nevertheless, he withdrew hastily a little farther within the shelter of the trees on the island, an example which his companion as speedily followed.

The canoes, however, were not seeking the island. After slightly changing their course, they held steadily on their way up the lake, and in the course of a half-hour had become only little specks upon the water in the distance, and soon after disappeared entirely from the sight of the watchers on the island.

It was with a feeling of relief that Jairus then

said: "It'll be safe now for us to go back, won't it? I'm hungry, and we'll find something to eat around the place, I'm sure."

"Not yet, not yet, my gallant friend. We don't know how many have been left behind. I rather think that those six canoes took all the band, but nobody can tell for sartain. They may be comin' back, too. No, all we can do is to stay here to-day, and perhaps to-night or to-morrow mornin' it'll be safe for us to paddle ashore. Neow, you go and lie down, and I'll keep one eye on the lake and the other on the shore, jest as if I was cross-eyed, ye see."

Jairus protested a moment, and urged his companion to rest first and permit him to keep watch; but Jeremiah was determined, and as the lad was almost worn out by the exertions of the night, he soon allowed himself to be persuaded; and within a sheltered spot and under the warm rays of the summer sun he soon stretched himself upon the ground and was asleep.

Just how long he slept, he did not know, but he was awakened by Jeremiah shaking him gently by the shoulder. "Come, Jairus, wake up! We've got visitors."

"Got what?" exclaimed the startled lad, at once standing erect and looking sharply at his companion.

"Got vis'tors. Can't ye understand the king's English? About two hours ago I sighted a little

craft comin' over the lake. I didn't jest know what to make of it at first, but I kept still and said nothin', which same is a habit o' mine. Pretty quick, I discovered they were a makin' for this very island, so I still kept still and said nothin', though I watched 'em mighty sharp. Well, they landed all right, and there were two of 'em, jest two and no more. And both was redcoats, or leastwise one of 'em was, for he had on the redcoat uniform. They're both young fellows, too. Boys, 'most like you."

"Are they here now?"

"One of 'em is. The other fellow, the one what didn't have any uniform on, soon after they landed took the little skiff they had in tow and started for the shore. The other fellow's here, and all alone. Ye see, it's all clear that some of those chaps are up by your house yet. Jairus, you never ought to have built your house on such a thoroughfare. 'Twas a big mistake, my lad, though I'm not sayin' you are to blame for it."

"And you say there's only one here now?"

"Yes, only one."

"Then why don't we go down and get him, or at least take his boat?"

"'Cause he's got guns and we've got none, and that's where the fun's begun," said Jeremiah soberly. "Still, I'm not sayin' your suggestion's a bad one. Come on and we'll take a peep at him and see how the land lies."

Jairus quickly followed his companion, and to-

gether they moved noiselessly among the trees until they came to a place from which they could look down and see the little boat on the shore, and not far away the young "British redcoat," as Jeremiah termed him.

CHAPTER XVI.

A PRIZE.

For a moment Jairus and his companion did not speak. The young soldier was seated upon the ground and leaning against a tree. At first they thought he was asleep, but as he soon stirred and lazily struck at the daisies near him with the dead branch he was holding in his hands, they knew that he must be awake, though apparently he was feeling the influence of the warm summer day.

And the day itself was almost ideal. The sun, now high in the heavens, had burned away every vestige of a cloud in the sky. The waters of the lake were almost like glass, while the mountains in the distance appeared indistinct and dim in the haze which surrounded them. The occasional notes of some bird, or the shrill grating sounds of the insects, were all that could be heard. The only indication of war was the young soldier in his bright-colored uniform, and even he seemed to have lost all interest in the struggle, under the influence of the peaceful scene about him.

"Are you sure he's the only soldier on the island?" whispered Jairus at last.

"Sartain, sure," replied Jeremiah. "I had my eye on 'em when they landed and there were only two, and one o' the pair's gone ashore. No, he's the sole subject of his satanic — beg pardon, I mean Britannic — majesty on this 'ere island o' peace, which by good right belongs to New Hampshire."

"Of course he's armed, Jeremiah?"

"That's what I can't tell yet. I can make out a gun or two on the boat, but I can't see any near him. You look, Jairus; your eyes are sharper than mine."

Jairus again looked carefully on the ground at the feet of the young soldier, but reported that he could not discover any weapon of warfare.

"He thinks he's safe and lord o' all he surveys," said Jeremiah. "My 'pinion is that he's waitin' for that other fellow to come back. We won't wait any longer. We'll come up to the lad atween him and the shore, and that'll cut him off from his pop-guns. Neow you let me do the talkin', Jairus, and you jest follow me and do as I do. Come on, neow. It's high time we were a movin'."

They crept out from their hiding-place and made their way carefully and slowly along the shore, prepared to make a dash for the boat if the young soldier discovered them too soon. But the drowsy redcoat had no thought of company on the island, and his head nodded again and again, as if he had almost forgotten the fact that he was there himself.

"We're all right neow," said Jeremiah as they

came in line with the boat. "Neow we'll wake him up!

"Mornin' to ye, friend," said Jeremiah as he and his companion left the shore and started towards the young soldier. "Mornin' to ye," he repeated as they came nearer.

The man was awake in an instant, and as he glanced quickly about him for his gun, Jeremiah smiled sympathetically, and said, "Ye wasn't lookin' for vis'tors here, like enough?"

"Who are you?" demanded the young soldier, realizing that he was cut off from an approach to his boat. He could not entirely conceal his alarm, and yet he was striving to be cool and collected.

"Oh, we're jest two o' the inhabitants of this goodly land. Jest let me ask who may you be, yourself?"

"I'm Sergeant Richmond, and I belong to General Fraser's division."

"Glad to hear it," replied Jeremiah solemnly. "Glad to hear. And what may you be a doin' here?"

The young soldier glanced suspiciously at the speaker before he replied. Perhaps he felt somewhat uncertain of the reception his reply would meet. But he soon threw off his hesitation, as he said: "I'm on my way to meet some recruits and get some supplies for the army. Not that we need them very much, but the Canadians haven't done very well for us yet, for the general says he has

only about a hundred and fifty of them in the army. We don't need them, but if they want to come in, I'm not the man to keep them out."

He was rapidly recovering his confidence now, and boldly added: "Perhaps you two belong to them. This man," he added, looking keenly at Jairus as he spoke, "looks like some one I've seen before. You either belong to the army, or I've seen you there, haven't I?"

Before Jairus could reply, Jeremiah said abruptly: "There's no use in mincin' matters, my young friend. We belong to the Yankee rebels, as you call 'em, and what's more, you belong to us."

The young soldier's boldness for the moment disappeared. He glanced quickly about him as if he was looking for some means of escape, but apparently concluding that he must remain and face his danger, he said: —

"What are you going to do with me? It's little good a prisoner will do you now."

"Why isn't a prisoner as good for us as it is for you, with your Dutch butchers and redcoats?"

"Why, just because your whole army are prisoners now. Every mother's son of them by this time has surrendered to General Burgoyne."

"What's that you say? What ye talkin'? Don't ye try any o' yer dodges on me, young man!" said Jeremiah. "I'm not exactly in the frame o' mind to put up with sech nonsense at the present moment."

"I mean just what I say," replied the young

soldier, quick to see the effect of his words, and becoming instantly bolder. "Of course you know we've got Ticonderoga?"

"Got Ticonderoga? What ye talkin'? Ye don't mean what ye're a sayin'?"

"Yes, I do mean just what I'm saying. We took Ticonderoga without losing a man, and the rebels have put out across the country on the double quick. General Fraser's after those who are on the other side of the lake, and when we started, we could hear the guns over by Hubbardton, and there's no doubt he's got 'em all before this time. And as for the others, why, General Burgoyne's after them and probably by this time he's got 'em all, or driven 'em right into Clinton's hands. Oh, we've got you, my festive Yankee, we've got you!"

The depression of Jeremiah, which could not be concealed, produced a corresponding elation in the manner of the young redcoat, and no one who might have seen them there would have suspected the true relation in which they stood.

Jeremiah was silent a moment, and then, turning to Jairus, said: "Come, my lad, we must get out o' this. I don't believe the little whipper-snapper's told the truth, but we can't wait to find out. We don't want you," he added, turning to the soldier, "but will have to trouble ye for the loan o' that boat o' yours."

"What! and leave me here alone?"

"Oh, you've got company. I wasn't blind when

that other fellow left you here and went ashore. He'll be back pretty quick, jest as soon's he's set fire to a few more widows' houses, I suppose. I'd sarve ye jest right if I strung ye up on the first tree here, and left ye as a kind of a warnin' to yer prowlin' bands o' redskins, and yer cowboy traitors. Yes, sir, I'd sarve ye jest right to do it, but I'm not one o' that kind, so ye can remember yer marcies and say yer prayers whilst that companion o' yours does his little errand. Come, Jairus, you hist the sail and I'll be down and join ye in a minit."

Despite the protests of the young soldier, Jeremiah and Jairus soon set sail from the island, taking with them the two guns they found on board. The wind was so light that for a time they were compelled to use the oars, but as long as the island could be seen, the figure of the young sergeant could be discerned upon the shore.

"Hold on a bit; this is too hard work," said Jeremiah at last. "The wind's comin' up a little, too, and we'd better crawl along under that than use up all our strength. You take the tiller, Jairus, and I'll crawl into the cabin and see if I can't find somethin'."

Jairus took the tiller obediently, and a moment later was startled by the exclamation which came from the cabin. Before he could leave his seat, however, Jeremiah appeared, and in his hands was a goodly portion of the supplies which Sergeant Richmond had had stored on board. As it had

been many hours now since either had tasted food, the sight was a welcome one, and for a time neither spoke, so busied were they both in the immediate occupation which followed.

"There! that's what I call a good oming," said Jeremiah at last, pausing for a moment.

"A good what?"

"A good oming. Can't ye understand the English language? A good oming, a good sign, a kind of a providential feeding o' the ravens, as it were. No, I mean feedin' by the ravens — Oh, you know what I mean. I'm glad to get them victuals. There! now ye understand, don't ye?"

"Yes," said Jairus briefly; for the lad was not yet ready to talk. "Yes, I know what you mean now, Jeremiah."

"Well, neow that the cravin's o' the inner man's been satisfied, we've got to settle what's become or what's goin' to become o' the outer man. I don't feel half so scared as I did when that little popinjay told his story up there on the island. It's wonderful what victuals will do for a man at my time o' life, Jairus. My wife's known it, too, these many years, and I'm about sartain sure that Thankful's right now. Victuals is wonderful things, my lad."

"Why don't you feel afraid now? Don't you think he told the truth?"

"Yes, I do. He told the truth, but he didn't tell the whole truth and nothin' but the truth, that's what I mean. My 'pinion is that the little upstart

told the truth about Fort Ty, but I don't believe a word o' what he says about everybody's havin' given up. Not much!"

"If the fort's got into the hands of Burgoyne, what shall we do? We can't keep straight on up the lake. Hadn't we better put across to the other side?"

"That's what I've been thinkin' about. Neow let's see heow it looks, Jairus, my lad. If there's any truth in what that little British redcoat told us, there's some of the Britishers over there. Probably 'twas only a part that took to the Green Hills. My 'pinion is that the most o' the crowd's gone on up to Skenesborough, or maybe to Fort Edward, and that's where the most o' the trouble's likely to be, right along twixt there and Albany. That's their game, you know, to get us in between Johnnie and Clinton, and then squeeze us as I'd squeeze a cowcumber between my two hands. That's where they'll want every mother's son of us, I guess, and I guess, too, that that's about where we'd better go, Jairus, my boy."

"But how shall we get past this army?" persisted Jairus. "I don't just see how we're to do that."

"Jest as easy as slidin' deown hill. We'll keep on up the lake as far's we can go, then we'll land and start out towards Fort Edward. We'll take pains, though, to hide this craft; for 'twould be a shameful waste to leave her where the redcoats might get her. I don't believe you'll ever want her,

Jairus; but like as not I may some day, and you wouldn't feel hurt, would you, if I should claim her as mine? Neow would ye?"

"Not a bit," replied Jairus, laughing good-naturedly, as he saw the project in the mind of his companion.

The "frugality" of Jeremiah was something which had become apparent long before this time. "But," he continued, "I don't jest see how we'll get around the army. That's what troubles me. If you know, you know more than I do. That's all I can say."

"Who said I didn't know more'n you, I'd like to know? In course I know more'n you. Didn't I tell ye I'd held ye on my lap when ye was nothin' but a little squallin' baby? That was long afore ye had a eye-tooth in yer head, Jairus, and I had two eyes and both eye-teeth, too."

"Yes, you're a good deal older than I am," said Jairus, "and you ought to know more. I hope you do, with all my heart; for I don't feel as if I knew much of anything, just at present."

"What? What's that ye say? Ye're a callin' me a old man, are ye? Neow, Jairus, I'd a hardly thought that of ye, I hardly would. 'Tisn't jest respectful like. I'm surprised at ye. Indeed, I am. I did hold ye on my lap when you was jest a baby, but I'm not a sayin' I was so very old at the time, am I? No, Jairus, I didn't think that o' you, I didn't, indeed."

"I wasn't thinking of your age," replied Jairus, "but of your experience. I'm sure if that young redcoat had felt your hand on him, he'd have thought his last day had come. I only wish I had half as strong an arm as you have, Jeremiah. It was just your experience I was thinking of, and what a good thing it was that you knew what we're trying to do. If we get out of this trouble, it will be because you got us out. I can't see any way myself."

"No more ye can't, my lad," said Jeremiah, mollified in a moment by his companion's words. "I'm jest a tellin' ye that I'm goin' to get you and me, too, out of it, if it can be done."

"How are you going to do it?"

"Well, it's this way, ye see. It's more'n likely as how old Ty is in the hands of the Britishers, and we want to fight shy of that. The thing for us to do is to land somewhere this side o' the fort—takin' good care o' this craft in course; for, somehow, I feel as if I might want her again. Then I know a trail out to the road to Albany, and not so very far away is where Alec Bryan has his tavern. He's a good man, Alexander is. Ever see him, Jairus?"

"No."

"Well, he is a good man. He keeps on a tendin' to business jest the same as if John Burgoyne and his redcoats wasn't within a thousand miles of here, as we all know that's where they ought to be. If nothin's happened to Alec, he'll fix us all right. I

don't mind tellin' you, Jairus, for you're a pretty likely lad, if you did call me a old man just now, that Alec knows a thing or two. And one thing he knows is how to make the redcoats think he's one thing when he isn't that thing at all. Somehow, he's helped Phil Schuyler to know something he didn't know before, too."

"What is he — a spy?"

"That isn't what we call it. That's a dangerous word around here. But we'd better land, I'm thinkin', as the sun is most out of sight."

Jeremiah, who was now holding the tiller, ran the little boat into a sheltered cove, and soon, by the combined efforts of both, they stripped her of her sails and mast, and then hauled her up on the shore and concealed her within the bushes.

The sun had long since disappeared when they left the spot, and, in the darkness, well aware that they were in the midst of many threatening dangers, they started through the forest in their effort to make their way to the tavern of Alexander Bryan.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHAT THE ARMIES WERE DOING.

In order to understand some portions of this story soon to follow, it will be necessary for us at this time to return and follow the movements of the armies.

General St. Clair, as we already know, had planned to retreat by a circuitous route when he hastily withdrew from Fort Ticonderoga, and join General Schuyler, who, with about two thousand men, lay at Fort Edward at that time.

General St. Clair's plan was good, but to plan, and to carry out a plan, are two very different matters. So while some of the retreating army were hastening by land towards Skenesborough, and others were using all their powers to escape by water to the same place, General St. Clair, with a goodly portion of his army, had been retreating among the Green Hills of Vermont, and in hot pursuit of him were General Fraser's division and a band of Hessians, both of whom General Burgoyne had despatched to scatter the remnants of the rebel army.

General Fraser's men were in advance of the Hessians; for they had started sooner and, besides, they had marched with more rapidity than the slow-moving Germans. Consequently the firing which Samuel Goodwin had heard early in the morning of the 7th of July, when he and the pompous young sergeant had left the British army to meet the Tories, who supposedly were advancing from Canada, had been between General Fraser's advanced guard and the rear guard of the retreating Americans.

General St. Clair and his army had arrived at Hubbardton on the preceding afternoon. His men were in confusion, and fear was manifest on every side.

Seth Warner, with a band of patriots, was at that time marching towards Ticonderoga, all unaware of the disaster which had overtaken the fort, but at Hubbardton he fell in with the retreating forces.

General St. Clair hastily sent word for Colonel Francis, who was in command of his rear guard, to remain with Warner and cover the retreat of the main division, which now pushed rapidly forward for Castleton. Colonel Warner, who was then the commander of the forces which remained at Hubbardton, very foolishly, and we may also say recklessly, halted for the night, instead of keeping within a short distance of the main body. However, he caused many trees to be felled before his camp, and threw up such obstructions as lay within

his power and might hinder the British if they did not check them, in the event of their advancing to attack him.

It was early in the morning, and the Americans in Warner's camp were just preparing their breakfast, when the pickets were driven in by the sharp and unexpected firing of Fraser's men. Though they were completely surprised, the Americans quickly rallied, and then, within sixty yards of each other, the two bodies formed for the battle.

The conflict at once became fierce. Colonel Francis seemed to be everywhere at once, and so conspicuous was his bravery that many of the British looked upon him as the commander instead of Warner; and great was their rejoicing when at last he fell, fighting bravely at the head of his regiment.

Colonel Warner was so strongly supported that the British, who had advanced, as they usually did, thinking that the Americans would quickly give way before them, were driven back. They formed again, returned to the attack, and, charging bayonets, compelled the Americans in turn to waver.

They, too, quickly reformed, and once more bravely advanced to the attack. So the issue of the battle wavered and swung back and forth. They were fighting among the trees, and the precautions Colonel Warner's men had taken now became of great service.

At this moment General Riedesel and his Hes-

sians appeared, for up to this moment they had not been able to overtake their companions in arms.

Quickly the Hessian general perceived that the Americans were moving more and more to the right, and would soon surround Fraser's left wing. Indeed, at that very moment word came to him from Fraser that he was afraid his left wing would be surrounded unless aid should be received at once.

General Riedesel immediately sent back word that he would attack the right wing of the Americans. He called upon his men to follow him, and shouting, and singing their own national airs, they advanced. Their appearance was formidable, their words were strange and unknown, and while the hardy troops met them with a brisk fire, they were nevertheless frightened by the appearance of the strange men.

The Hessians did not pause, and as the Americans saw that they themselves were almost surrounded now, and soon would be entirely so if they remained in their present position, they ceased from their firing and began a hasty retreat.

Twelve cannons were left behind them in their flight, but something of far greater value than the dozen pieces of artillery was left behind also: for the Americans had lost in the battle of Hubbardton three hundred and twenty-four men. The British loss was one hundred and eighty-three, but among them were seventeen of their best officers.

The victory had cost the British dearly, and they

hardly knew what to do with it, after it had been won. For three hours the eight hundred frontiersmen had held the picked soldiers of Burgoyne's army in check, and had it not been for the timely arrival of the Hessians, Fraser in all probability would have been taken. Besides all that, as the Hessians advanced, the Americans had no means of knowing how many there were of them, and perhaps fancied the entire army of Burgoyne was coming. Their ammunition was now gone, and they had no medicine or shelter for their wounded.

Meanwhile, as we know, the British were chasing the little flotilla of the Americans up the lake towards Skenesborough. With a few shots of their cannon, they had broken the great chain which the Americans had stretched across the water, and the boom and bridge had also been destroyed. The passage was then clear, and with the wind in their favor the British sailed up Wood creek and by afternoon had overtaken the flotilla at Skenesborough.

Some of Burgoyne's men had meanwhile landed at South Bay, and were doing their utmost to cut off the retreat of the forces by land, then to destroy Skenesborough and prevent them from making their way to Fort Anne. While the Americans on land moved too rapidly to permit this to be done, the British frigates, having now come up, overpowered the galleys, and two of them soon surrendered, while three were blown up.

In despair of being able to make a stand against their enemy, the Americans set fire to their possessions at Skenesborough, and after having destroyed what would not burn, began another retreat, this time towards Fort Anne.

Word of the dual disaster — the loss at Hubbardton and the destruction of Skenesborough — was brought at the same time to General St. Clair, who had pushed on and halted at Castleton.

The general was sadly troubled, we may be sure. His soldiers were discouraged, cowed, and inclined no longer to obey their leaders; for their confidence in them was fast passing away. The direct road to Fort Edward, where he was to join General Schuyler, had now also been cut off.

Desertions followed, but General St. Clair pressed on as best he could, and advancing by the way of Rutland, Manchester, and Bennington, he succeeded at last in gaining Fort Edward, and joining Schuyler's forces on the 12th of July; but he brought with him only about half of the men he had led from Fort Ticonderoga. Colonel Warner's men had not joined him either, but after having rallied his little band as best he could, the leader at last brought them to Bennington, where he halted.

General Burgoyne was now acting promptly, and had he displayed the same energy throughout his campaign, this story and the American Revolution might have had a far different issue. Success beyond his highest hopes had been his, but the success

was too easily won, and it was not long before the British general began to think his forces invincible, all the Americans cowards, and that nothing could now hinder his march to join Clinton. Much of this, however, belongs to a later portion of this story, and must be passed over at this time.

As soon as Burgoyne gained possession of Skenesborough, in order to increase the terror which he believed his success already had produced among the scattered people of the region and to cut off as many as possible from gaining Fort Anne, he ordered a regiment to proceed towards that fort.

The regiment had not gone far before it overtook and captured some boats on which women, children, and some of the stores had been placed. These fell easily into their hands, and the regiment did not halt until it had arrived within a quarter of a mile of Fort Anne.

Here a man joined them whom the colonel received as a deserter from the Americans, little dreaming that he was not a deserter, but a spy.

The stranger reported that the fort had a strong garrison; so the valiant colonel halted his veterans, and sent back for reinforcements.

The "strong garrison" in the fort consisted of five hundred men, many of them ill or wounded, and in no condition either to make or resist an attack. But Colonel Van Rensselaer and Colonel Long, who were in command, having been stationed there by General Schuyler himself, were not men to

give up easily, and having learned from the "deserter," who had now returned and reported the exact condition of affairs in the British camp, they quickly decided to do the attacking themselves.

The plans were carefully formed, and early on the following morning (the 8th of July) Colonel Long and his men suddenly burst forth from the fort and attacked the British in front; while Colonel Van Rensselaer and his men, passing through the woods around the left flank of the British, at the same time rushed upon them.

Shouts, shots, and calls were mingled, and the startled British quickly fled for refuge to the top of the hill, but the Americans pressed steadily on after them. For two hours the engagement continued, and the Americans steadily were gaining, when suddenly it was learned that their ammunition had given out.

At the same time a band of Indians, yelling and brandishing their tomahawks, rushed forth from the woods. The combined misfortunes were too much to be borne, and the Yankee colonels speedily departed, — after having also learned that a large body of reinforcements for the British was on its way from Burgoyne, — and safely made their way to Fort Edward.

The British, having ascertained that the fort had been abandoned, soon withdrew, and returned to the main army, and a few days later the Americans

again occupied the fort, or rather what there was then remaining of it.

A stretch of sixteen miles lay between Fort Anne and Fort Edward. Swamps and hills abounded; and the few roads were rough and in places well-nigh impassable. General Schuyler at once proceeded to increase the difficulties of Burgoyne in moving his forces.

Had the British general continued to act with the energy and promptness he had displayed up to this time, doubtless all of Schuyler's efforts would have been useless.

As it was, however, he caused the roads to be dug up in places and obstructed; he threw great rocks into Wood creek, so that vessels could not pass up it; he destroyed what bridges there were; he felled trees directly across the roads in such a manner that their branches interlocked and made almost an impenetrable wall; he opened trenches, and, in fact, did so many things of a similar nature that the British general was troubled on every side.

His own inclination now was to delay, and his soldiers did not murmur; for the wilderness was difficult for them to act in. At the time when General Schuyler increased their troubles after the manner we have described, their efforts were all required in other directions. Still, it is now known that had Burgoyne then pushed steadily forward, he probably could have made his way successfully to Albany and joined Clinton.

His labor for a time now consisted in removing the obstacles which Schuyler had placed in his pathway. He had to build more than forty bridges, one of which was over a swamp and more than two miles in length.

In addition to all this, he delayed, and gave the Americans time to assemble and concentrate their forces, while he sent Colonel Baum and a detachment of Hessians to Bennington, to scatter the rebels and seize the stores which he had heard had been collected there.

General de Riedesel strongly opposed the plan, and even begged that the men should be sent by the way of Castleton, when he saw that Burgoyne was determined upon the movement.

Again the British general made a mistake; for had his men fallen upon the rear of the Americans, doubtless they would have won.

But Burgoyne would listen to no words of advice. Confident that the Americans could not, or would not, stand before his troops, and that many of them would flock to his standard, he insisted upon carrying out his plan, and Colonel Baum and the Hessians were ordered to march to Bennington.

The Hessians, besides being unfamiliar with the country and with the frontier methods of fighting, were not well equipped for the service. They wore high and heavy jack boots on which there were long spurs, stiff leather breeches, gauntlets that came well up on their arms, and huge hats over which waved a great plume of feathers.

By their sides trailed great broadswords; short but heavy carbines were slung over their shoulders, while down their backs hung their long queues. Surely while many of the Americans could boast of no uniforms, their condition was much better than that of soldiers equipped as were these Hessians for a march through the forests, and for an engagement on a warm summer day.

Such, then, was the true condition of affairs in the two armies; but as the days passed it was long before Jairus or Jeremiah learned of it, and as for Samuel Goodwin, weeks passed between the reports of the muskets, which he and the pompous young sergeant heard when they left Fraser's army near Hubbardton, and the time when again the movements of either the British or the American armies were known by him.

And General John Burgoyne up to this time had steadily and easily carried everything before him. What success attended his future efforts must be related in the chapters which follow.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

SAMUEL'S RETURN.

It was late in the afternoon when young Samuel Goodwin and the youthful sergeant came close to the New York shore of the lake. Theirs had been the only boat seen during their voyage, and the sounds of the musketry which they had heard, when they hurriedly left the British army near Hubbardton, had been the only tokens of the terrible struggle which was going on in that region.

And Samuel was sadly troubled. It was true that for the time being he had left the British army, but there was little to cheer him in the prospect. He knew that already many of those scattered settlers in Vermont, who dwelt west of the mountains, had yielded to the pressure of the British and to their own fears, and while they had not openly espoused the cause of the king, had nevertheless taken the oath of allegiance to the crown and had thereby ceased to be friendly to the cause of the colonies.

Burgoyne's proclamation had also had its influence, and many who in their hearts had no love for

the redcoats had come to look upon the struggle as practically ended. Raw recruits and rough men of the frontier would make but a poor showing against the well-trained and better equipped forces of General Burgoyne, so they thought, and so Samuel Goodwin was beginning to believe. Certainly, the stand which St. Clair had made at old Fort Ty was not very promising, and if that could be considered as a sample of the bravery of the Continentals, the result of the campaign would not long be left in doubt. Practically without the loss of a man, the British had swept the lake, gained the fort, and seized the most of its equipments and stores.

Added to all this was the thought of his mother. Where she now was, he did not know. The bands of prowling savages, the pathless forest, the want of food and protection, were only too familiar to him, and the gloom which surrounded the lad was not dispelled as the little boat made its way slowly across the lake under the gentle breeze which just rippled the surface.

"You don't seem to be very eager to see your father," said the young sergeant at last.

"Don't I?" replied Samuel, striving to rouse himself to a display of some interest. "Well, perhaps I don't, that's a fact. But somehow I can't get the sound of those guns over by Hubbardton out of my ears. I can almost see the men falling on every side."

"Pooh! they're only the rebels falling, and you needn't waste any sympathy on them. If it was our side, you might feel that way, but it's only the rebel Yankees, that's all."

"That's enough," replied Samuel. "If you had some of your own friends there, you might sing a different tune. For my part, I wish the whole thing was over."

"It'll be over soon enough, never you fret yourself about that. I fancy it's pretty much over now, for that matter. I don't see what they wanted to send us off on this wild-goose chase for, anyway. We don't need any more help, with all due respect to your paternal relative. I think we could have made out to get along very well without his valuable aid."

Samuel thought of the eagerness the young sergeant had displayed to hasten to the boat, at the time when the sound of the guns had been heard in their rear; but he was playing a part now, and must not forget himself.

Accordingly he made no reply, but as he perceived that they were running close inshore, he became interested as he recalled one after another of the familiar spots. He and his brother had fished together in this part of the lake, and paddled up and down it in the light little canoes they had obtained from the Indians. Only a step back from the shore was their home. How he and Jairus had worked together there! The sheep-pen had been

built by them, and they had felled the great trees, made potash of their ashes, and had tilled the little clearings, in their eagerness to gain a home for themselves and their widowed mother. But all that was past now. The home was broken up. His mother had disappeared, and where his brother Jairus was, was only a matter of conjecture.

Rousing himself by an effort, he turned to his companion as he said: "I think this island's a good place to spend the night on. Let's land here."

"What do we want to land for? Why can't we just keep on all night? We'll get word to your father up at St. John's all the quicker, and can then come back to the army. I don't want to lose all the fun. I suppose I feel differently from you about this matter, but you know an officer can't think of himself alone."

"I know that's so, Sergeant, but I know this lake too. There's a chance of striking a rock, and besides all that, there may be some of the Indians in the woods here, who wouldn't always stop to inquire whether you were Sergeant Richmond or not; or whether you were a rebel Yankee or a redcoat."

"That's so. That's so," replied the sergeant quickly, although Samuel could not determine whether it was his reference to him as an officer, or his incidental mentioning the possible presence of the Indians, that induced him to acquiesce in his suggestion so readily.

At his companion's suggestion, Samuel now took

the tiller, and in a few moments the little cat-boat was grounded on the pebbly beach, and drawn up on the shore. The lad had already formed a plan in his own mind, but he knew the present was no time for its execution; so he soon joined the young sergeant and made a hearty supper upon the provisions with which the boat had been well supplied when they set forth from the Vermont shore.

The sun had long since disappeared. No fire had been kindled, for Samuel had explained that it might attract the attention of their enemies, and the sergeant had made no protest. The air of the summer night was soft and balmy, and the rough music of the frogs and the occasional call of some night bird were all the sounds that disturbed the silence.

Behind them rose the great shadows of the mountains, while the lake lay as smooth before them as if it had been of glass. The scene was depressing, however, in spite of its peaceful appearance, and for a time neither of the young soldiers spoke as they remained seated by the shore where they had had their supper.

Samuel's thoughts were not idle, however, and at last he broached the project which had been in his mind ever since they had approached the New York shore.

"We'll want to put out early in the morning, and ought to reach my uncle's — I mean my father's —

before night. We can do it if we have any wind at all, and nobody interferes with us."

"Yes, we want to make an early start. I wasn't in favor of stopping at all, but as you're the pilot, I suppose I must. Don't you think we'd better go on now?"

"No, no," said Samuel quickly. "I'll tell you what I want to do. Before you're awake to-morrow morning, I want to take the skiff and go ashore. I know this spot where we are, and right in back from the shore my mother — my uncle, I mean — lives. Now I'll run up there, and if anybody's at home, I can find out, and it may be my uncle himself will be there. I know he does come there often."

"You say your uncle lives back there in the woods?" said the young sergeant, sitting upright at once.

"Yes," replied Samuel, "not over a quarter of a mile back from the shore, I should think."

"Well, then, why in the name of common sense don't we put straight for there now? We'll have a place to sleep in, and it may be they'll need our protection. They're straight royalists, aren't they?"

"Oh, they're all straight enough, no doubt about that," said Samuel hastily, detecting at once the fear of his companion to pass the night on the island. "But you see I'm not sure anybody's there. In times like these no one knows but they may have put out for safety. Then, too, the place is right by the trail from Schroon lake to Canada, and

I don't want to run the risk of having an Indian send his tomahawk at me in the dark. However, if you want to go, I'll not say a word."

"No, no," protested the officer in His Majesty's army. "We're all right here. Do you think it will be safe for you to go up there in the morning? Perhaps we'd better not wait, but start right out."

"Perfectly safe. Perfectly safe," said Samuel, rejoicing as he saw the effect of his own suggestion. "I'll go up, and you can expect me to be back before you're fairly awake. If you don't mind, I think we'd better turn in now; for I confess I'm pretty well tired out, with all we've had to go through. It's no light piece of work, this chasing the Yankees. They can run if they can't do anything else."

"That they can," laughed his companion. "I'm ready to turn in. The only thing I had thought of was that it might be a good thing for one of us to stand guard. Still, I don't know that it's necessary."

"We'll crawl back into the bushes, and we'll both be on guard somewhat, I'm thinking," replied Samuel.

The boys took their blankets from the boat, and withdrawing within the shelter of the trees, soon stretched themselves upon the ground.

The youthful sergeant was soon asleep, but to Samuel no sleep came. He was so near his home, and was so eager to see it once more, that it was difficult for him to wait for the morning to come. However, the very means he had employed to

arouse the fears of his companion were not without weight in his own mind. The visit of the Panther to the sheep-pen and passage of the Indians he had witnessed from the hiding-place in the tree, came back in his thoughts now, and in spite of his eagerness, he was content to await the coming of the morning before making his attempt. Not much sleep came to him that night. His missing brother was often in his thoughts, and the many sad troubles of his mother could not be forgotten. The very silence of the night was oppressive, and it was with a feeling of relief that at last he perceived the coming of the dawn.

The lad made his way down to the shore without disturbing his companion, who was still sleeping soundly, and as he approached the boat a new suggestion came to him. Should he take the skiff, or both the skiff and the boat? His companion then would certainly be unable to make any report of his failure to return; for Samuel had no thought of coming back to the pompous young sergeant. He had had quite enough of his company already.

He hesitated a moment, and then concluded to leave the boat and take only the skiff. Had he known the purpose for which the boat would be used that very day, doubtless he would have done very differently.

He quickly set out in the skiff, and it was not until he had arrived at the shore that he remem-

bered that he had left one of the guns in the boat. He certainly ought to have taken the sergeant's as well as his own, he thought, but he was now on shore, and was so eager to go up to his home that all other things for the moment were ignored or forgotten.

The lad had not seen the weather-beaten face of an old soldier who had peered from behind a tree and watched his departure from the island, nor if he had seen him would he ever have dreamed who the old soldier's companion was. So close oftentimes do we come to the very things we most desire, and yet our eyes fail to see, and our ears to hear.

Samuel was not thinking of these matters as he hastily landed and started swiftly up the rough pathway. How many times he had been over it before, and how familiar the very trees of the forest were! And not far away was his home. Perhaps his mother might be there now!

Filled with the thought, he increased his speed and soon came to the place where the house had stood. Where it had stood, for now it was standing no longer. With a cry of astonishment Samuel stopped and looked before him. Only a pile of ashes and charred timbers stood where the house had been.

Swiftly, then, the lad ran forward and stopped by the ruins. It could not be true! Still, there were the ashes and the rude foundations of the house. He turned and looked about him as if he half ex-

pected to see the savages who had done the deed; for Samuel at once concluded that the Indians must have been the guilty ones. But no one was within sight. The soft yellow light of the rising sun was streaming through the forest. The squirrels were darting about the branches, and the air was filled with the songs of the early birds. But the ruins of the house were all that remained to show that the eye of another human being had ever looked upon the spot. It did not seem to him possible that such misfortune could come, and yet come it had. And perhaps his mother, and it might be his brother also, had been burned in the burning home. There were moments when the tears came into his eyes, and then again his eyes would be dry and hard, and he felt as if something was holding his throat in a tight grasp.

All this, however, did not prevent him from continuing his investigations, and for a half-hour he searched about the ruins, half expecting and half fearing to find something which should indicate the fate which had befallen his mother. But his search was unrewarded, and the mystery still remained.

Suddenly Samuel thought of the sheep-pen, and started directly towards the place. He had no expectation of finding anything there to aid him, but in his bitter disappointment and grief he followed the first suggestion that came to his mind. In a few moments the ruins of the sheep-pen were before him.

Here, however, a new light appeared; for from some of the ashes a little curl of smoke was still rising, and he knew that the marauders could not have been gone long. He glanced hurriedly about him, but only the trees of the forest could be seen. The pen must have been burned after the destruction of the house, he instantly perceived, for these were the only ashes which were still smouldering.

For a time he still remained and walked about the clearing, like one bereft of his mind. He dimly realized that by remaining there he might be a target for some unseen enemy, concealed, it might be, behind some tree; but he was not thinking of himself, or of his own danger. It was his mother now. The house had been burned, and it was more than probable that his mother was no more.

Suddenly, as he glanced again along the trail that led through the forest, he thought he perceived something moving in the distance. In an instant he thought of the hiding-place in the tree which he and Jairus and Arthur had made. His heart, in spite of his grief, became hard as he remembered his cousin, but not hesitating a moment, he quickly climbed the tree and gained the resting-place, which had been undisturbed, and he thought probably undiscovered. Once there, he waited in breathless suspense to learn whether his eyes had deceived him or not.

As the minutes passed, the lad could almost hear the beating of his heart. The morning sun was

climbing higher now and giving the promise of a warm day, but Samuel Goodwin was thinking of other things, and the sun and the heat were both forgotten.

He had almost concluded that his eyes had deceived him, when suddenly two men stepped forth into the clearing and approached the ashes; and the lad, now breathing hard and thoroughly frightened, peered down upon the strangers.

One of them was clad in a brown tow-shirt and rough-looking trousers, but he was barefooted. Over his broad shoulders were hanging his shot-bags and powder-horns, the latter plainly having corn-cob stoppers. He carried his rifle in his hands, and as he approached, his whole bearing indicated the possession of great physical strength.

His companion wore a hunting-shirt and his leggings were trimmed with fur, while his feet were shod with moccasins. He, too, carried a rifle, and the trembling Samuel, even in his excitement, perceived that it had two barrels. He had never seen or heard of such a thing before, but his attention was speedily drawn to the man's hunting-shirt. Some words had been worked upon it, and at first he could not decipher them. Soon, however, he made them out, and as he read the words "Liberty or Death," his own feeling of alarm at the sight of the short, broad-shouldered, powerful man was greatly increased.

CHAPTER XIX.

A TOILSOME JOURNEY.

THE two men advanced cautiously towards the ruins of the sheep-pen, each holding his rifle in readiness for use, and glancing keenly about them as they approached. Apparently the sight of the still smouldering ashes troubled them; for they carefully examined the ground, evidently searching for something which might furnish a solution to the problem.

As soon as they had finished their examination, they stood together and conversed for a few moments in such low tones that the listening Samuel was unable to hear anything that was said. Their hesitation lasted but a moment, for they soon turned and followed the path which led towards the house.

Greatly relieved by their departure, Samuel's first thought was to descend from his hiding-place and start at once for the forest; but the fear of the return of the strangers, and his own detection, held him back, and he concluded to wait a little longer in his place of concealment, which thus far had escaped their notice.

The lad had no means of knowing who or what the strangers were, but in his present state of alarm every man to him might be an enemy. Those strange words on the shirt of one of them — "Liberty or Death" — were certainly suggestive, and while there was nothing in them to indicate to which side the man who bore them belonged, it never once entered his mind that he could be a friend. They were both rugged-appearing men whom he did not wish to meet, and the fact that one of them was barefooted and the other carried a rifle with two barrels did not increase his feeling of confidence. Doubtless they were "cowboys," as many of the marauding Tories were called, and Samuel soon concluded that his best plan was to remain where he then was.

When a half-hour had passed, however, and nothing more was seen of the two strangers, he cautiously and slowly descended the tree, still retaining the gun he had brought from the boat, and stood for a moment by its base, listening intently and peering keenly about him.

Satisfied that no one was within sight, he made his way across the little clearing towards the sheep-pen. A little curl of smoke was still rising from one spot in the ashes, and as the lad waited a moment a flood of bitter thoughts swept over him. How cruel and needless the whole struggle was! What had he ever done to have brought upon him and his mother such wanton destruction! He

thought of the retreat from Ticonderoga, and again he could hear the sound of the guns over by Hubbardton. And what was the cause of it all? Nothing but the obstinacy of certain men who ought to have been friends, but who had shown themselves in anything but a friendly light. Surely the iniquities of the guilty were visited upon the innocent. And was the struggle worth what it was costing? Thousands of lives already had been sacrificed, many homes had been made desolate, and losses beyond his power to compute already had been the portion of the brave-hearted Continentals. Samuel was not thinking of his country. Indeed, he hardly knew whether he had a country or not; for his own heart was hot within him at the thought of the sorrows which had multiplied and swept over him of late. His mother — where was she? And Jairus had disappeared as completely as had his own home. Surely, all this was sufficient, he thought, to make any lad feel as if he were living in sad times, and none of us, in the larger light which has since come to us, can find it in our hearts to blame him.

All these thoughts had passed through his mind very quickly; for Samuel Goodwin was not one to linger and bemoan his misfortunes at a time when prompt action was required. He lingered but a moment by the ruins of the sheep-pen, which lay directly in his path to the forest, and then turned sharply and was about to dart into the woods, when his heart suddenly almost seemed to become still.

"WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?"

Returning from the house, and only a few rods distant and in plain sight, were the two strangers.

Samuel's first impulse was to run even then, but a sharp call from one of the men made him think better of it, and with many forebodings of evil, he waited for them to approach.

"How now? Who are you? What are you doing here?"

It was the barefooted man who spoke, and while his voice was sharp and suspicious, Samuel thought it was not unkind. He made no reply, however, and the two men halted directly in front of him.

"Who are you? What's the cause o' this smoke and ashes?" repeated the stranger.

"I don't know. I don't know any more about it than you do," the lad at last managed to reply.

"Come now, me lad, tell us all about it. Me name's Timothy Murphy, it is that, and ye can rest yer sowl that not one o' Dan'l Morgan's riflemen would harm a hair o' yer head, provided, of coorse, that ye spake the truth."

The shorter man, who carried the double-barrelled rifle, was the spokesman now, and as he listened to his words Samuel's heart gave a great throb. Daniel Morgan's riflemen! Ah, who had not heard of them? Their fame was abroad throughout all the colonies, and their bravery and skill had formed the theme of many a story.

"Are you one of Daniel Morgan's riflemen?" he quickly asked. "Do you belong to his band?"

"Oi do that," replied the man. "And this poor spalpeen by me side would loike to be inrolled there too, but he's not up to it yit. Oi'm trainin' him, that Oi am, and as sure's me name's Timothy Murphy, Oi'm thinkin' that when he can put a moccasin on his fut, he'll be loike to be able to hit a side of a barn, and then Dan'l may take him in. But as it is, he's nothin' but poor Barefut Benson now, and with all the toime and larnin' Oi'm after givin' him, he's not overpromisin'."

"Keep still, Tim. Let's hear what the lad has to say," interrupted Timothy's companion.

Then Samuel told his story. Assured that he was in the presence of friends, he kept nothing back, from the time when the band of Indians, with their British leaders, had appeared on the very place where they themselves were then standing, up to the time of his escape from the young sergeant and his return to his ruined home.

The men both listened attentively, or, as Samuel thought, not without sympathy, and when at last his story was completed, the taller man said: "Then you've left an officer over on the island, have you? I'm afraid he has plenty of company, for we tracked the rascals who burnt this place down to the shore. I think they must have gone up the lake in canoes, for we lost our trail there. Well, my lad," he added consolingly, "you're not the only one to suffer. There's not much comfort in that, I know, still it does give a different feeling to a man to know,

after all, that his lot is only the common one. What do you intend to do now? Your mother's gone and your brother's not here. You can't stay here, either."

"I don't believe I can," replied Samuel slowly. "But I don't know what to do."

"Sure, that's all plain, as plain as the fut here of me friend, the cilebrated 'Barefut Benson.' Yis, sir, it's as plain as the fut on yer face, Oi mean the nose on yer fut — No, no, that's not it. It's as plain as the nose on yer face. That's it. That's it."

"The lad'll go back with us to Fort Edward," interrupted Benson. "I'm inclined to think Tim's suggestion is a good one. We've been up around Schroon Lake to see if we could find any more signs of Indians. I should have thought General Schuyler had found enough, but he seems to think that there's a lot more coming from the West. Perhaps you know that Charles de Langlade has brought a band of Western Indians on to help the redskins Burgoyne has already got around here."

"No, I didn't know," replied Samuel. "I only knew the British had got a lot of redskins, but that's all."

"Yes, Captain de Peyster up at Michilimackinac urged Langlade to get a lot of the Sacs, Sioux, Foxes, Menominees, Winnebagoes, Ottawas, and Chippewas and join Burgoyne's army by the way of Montreal, and he's done it. But Schuyler's afraid more may come across the trail, so he sent

Tim and me up here on a scouting trip. We're going back to Fort Edward now, and you can go along with us if you want to. You'll have to take your chances, of course."

"And do you really belong to Morgan's riflemen?" inquired Samuel eagerly.

"Timothy here does, but I don't. Morgan doesn't seem to want any but Irishmen for the most part, for I can't seem to find any one in the band who isn't Irish."

"In coorse not," said Timothy quickly. "Dan'l Morgan is a Jarsey man himself, but he's got good Oirish blood in the veins of him. When he went down into Varginia, he took the flower of the whole country to make up his band, and what should that be but the sons of ould Oireland, I'd be after knowin'? Still, for a barefut, this man is not bad," added Timothy, slapping his companion on the back as he spoke. "Me hopes of him are not all dead yit, though," he continued.

His companion smiled, as he said to Samuel: "Timothy's a dead shot, I'll say that for him. You couldn't find a better man to be with, and he's got a rifle that speaks twice — the only one I ever saw."

"Whin ye git so that you can shoot with one, Oi'll be after gittin' you another like me own," said Timothy. "But Oi'm thinkin' we're talkin' too much. If ye'll take yer bare fut and start on, we'll be after followin' yez."

"Yes, they call me 'Barefoot Benson,'" said the

other man in reply to the question in Samuel's eyes. "I find I can travel faster with less noise in that way than any other, and there are times when I want to go fast and not make very much noise about it, either. And, after all, it's only a matter of custom and habit, you know. Why should my feet want any more protection than my hands, or my face either, for that matter? But we must start right away now. We want to put a good many miles between us and this place before night. We're short of rations, I must tell you that, my lad. We only brought a little with us, and that's been gone a long time."

"I don't mind that," said Samuel. "I'm so glad I have found friends, I can do without the other for a day or two, if it's necessary."

"Oi'm after thinkin' ye'll be remoinded of it before we get back to Fort Edward," said Timothy grimly.

The party of three at once started on their return to the fort, and for a time Samuel had no difficulty in maintaining his place by their sides. Samuel could see now why the leader was called "Barefoot Benson." His swift pace was steadily maintained; but, rapidly as he marched, the sturdy Timothy trudged steadily on and seemed to have no difficulty in doing so. For a time Samuel did not mind the effort, but as the sun climbed higher and the heat of the day increased, he found more and more difficulty in maintaining his swift pace. The perspiration rolled in streams down his face. The

pangs of hunger began to assert themselves. His legs ached, and his feet were soon swollen and sore.

Still "Barefoot Benson" led on, never halting, except for an occasional stop to listen for sounds which the others could not hear. Still Timothy kept by his side, his short legs by their rapid motions seeming to be able to keep up with the long strides of his companion. Still Samuel, weary and worn, brought up the rear of the little procession, doing his best to appear brave, and shutting his teeth tightly together, to prevent any sound escaping him.

On and on they moved, not a word being spoken and both trusting entirely to the leader. And "Barefoot Benson" led the way, apparently knowing no fatigue.

The sun passed the meridian and slowly began to descend. The intense heat of the midday did not seem to abate, for the air was still, and the shelter of the forest afforded only a slight relief. Samuel was suffering severely by this time, but not a complaint as yet had escaped his lips. His companions seldom glanced at him, but pushed steadily onward, each seemingly intent upon leaving the region behind them as quickly as possible.

It was now near sunset. A gentle breeze had arisen and afforded some relief from the heat, but Samuel was nearly exhausted. Every step he took caused him pain. His tongue was parched and

dry, and his breath came hard and fast. It seemed to him that he could go no farther.

He was about to tell his companions to go on and leave him, and that he would do his best to follow, but rest he must have now, when the leader stopped.

"Tired, Samuel?" he asked.

"Some," replied the lad, almost gasping as he spoke, and yet striving even then to conceal his weakness.

"'Twas a goodly pace, and you have done well. Now, we've got to settle our plans for the night," he added, turning to Timothy as he spoke. "Shall we keep on, or wait for the morning before we start?"

"Indade, and that's fur 'Barefut Benson' to say. Timothy Murphy's ready for either."

"I've seen some signs of Indians," said Benson anxiously. "If I was alone, I'd keep on, but I don't want to take you two into any unnecessary danger. I don't just know what to do."

"Don't do it, then," said Timothy. "That's what me ould mither used to say to me; says she, 'Timothy, me lad, ye're the light o' me ould eyes, that ye are. Now, Timothy, whiniver ye can't tell what to do, don't yez do it, me lad.' And Oi think she was corrict, rist her blissed sowl."

"Very well, we'll turn in here for the night. But we'd better separate. You and Samuel go on about ten rods and lie down in the grass, and I'll turn in

here. If the redskins find us then, they'll only find us one at a time. It's almost dark now, so we'd better turn in at once, for we may want to start early in the morning. Good night to you both."

Benson at once stretched himself upon the ground in the tall grass which was growing there, and Timothy and Samuel immediately followed his directions, and going a few rods farther on, also lay down in the rank cool grass, which entirely concealed them.

Samuel soon knew from the sounds that his companion was asleep, but it was long before he could close his own eyes. Completely worn out by the exertions of the day, he was too weary to sleep. He thought of the young sergeant he had left alone on the island, and wondered if he were still there. He could not shut out the vision of the ruins of his home. The curling smoke still rose before him, and at times he almost fancied that he could hear the voice of his mother calling to him for aid.

At last, however, the twinkling of the stars above him took on fantastic shapes, the murmurings of the night wind became more indistinct, and Samuel slept.

How long he slept, he could not tell, but he was awakened by what he thought was the sound of footsteps. He listened, and the sound was repeated. He reached over and touched his sleeping companion on the arm, and in a moment Timothy, too, was awake and listening intently.

The sound of the footsteps was repeated, and then

at a whispered word Samuel took his gun and began to creep with Timothy through the grass towards the place from which the sound came. As they came nearer, they could see indistinctly an object moving before them.

"Shoot," whispered Timothy; and the reports of their guns rang out together, while almost at the same instant the report of another gun was heard.

A groan and the fall of some body followed. There was a struggle for a moment, then silence followed, and in the dim light both Timothy and Samuel crept cautiously forward through the grass to discover the result of their shots.

CHAPTER XX.

AN EARLY MORNING START.

JAIRUS and Jeremiah did not advance far into the country on the night when they left the lake and the little cat-boat, which the shrewd Vermonter claimed as his own special prize — a claim which his young companion was not disposed to question under the existing circumstances. They both were so tired and worn by their recent exertions that when Jeremiah proposed that they should seek the shelter of a rude barn, which stood alone in a little clearing near the rough roadway, Jairus heartily consented; and creeping within it they both slept soundly until morning.

They had taken the precaution to bring with them some of the provisions they had discovered in the boat, and after breakfasting they resumed their journey in far better spirits than they had had on the preceding night. As neither wore a uniform, their appearance attracted but little attention as they passed the few homes of the settlers, scattered along the road. All day long they kept steadily on their way, and not long after nightfall they arrived at the tavern of Alec Bryan.

Bryan was at home, and the quiet greeting he gave Jeremiah at once betrayed the secret understanding which existed between the two. Jairus watched the man with more than a passing curiosity; for his companion had related so many stories of his deeds and daring, that his curiosity had been greatly excited. Nor had Jeremiah overstated the worth of his friend in the words of praise he had given him.

Alexander Bryan was then a man about forty-four years of age. Born in Connecticut, early in life he had emigrated to Dutchess County. There he married and remained for a few years, and then under the influence of the prevailing feeling, which caused many of the pioneers to change their abode frequently, he had gone on into the region where our acquaintances found him.

His house, which stood on the road leading northward to the wilderness and the Canadas, became a tavern, and throughout the war was the resort of the friends and enemies of the colonies alike.

And, strange as it may seem, Bryan retained the confidence of both parties in the struggle, and was kept informed of the actions and plans of each side. His patriotism was well known by the American leaders, however, and their confidence in him was not misplaced, as we shall soon see.

He was a man of striking appearance, calm and collected, and with a shrewd and not unkindly face

which betokened the possession of far more than ordinary intelligence.

"Well, Jeremiah," said Bryan as the two travellers seated themselves in the "public room," "I didn't just look for to see you here now. I thought you were at Fort Edward, along with Schuyler and his men."

"Ye keep pretty well posted, Alec," replied Jeremiah, "but there are some things ye don't know. Tell me how the land lies about here. What's the upshot of the retreat from old Ty? Any Whigs left?"

"Plenty of 'em, plenty," replied Bryan. "Things haven't turned out just as we hoped, but we're not dead yet. Burgoyne's got the upper hold, but to my mind it's a question whether he can hang on to it, or not."

"Have many gone over to the redcoats?" asked Jeremiah.

"Yes, some. Some on 'em was scared and some was glad to go. It's pretty much like some men who talk when they've got pinched or pushed pretty hard that they've lost their faith in the Almighty. They haven't lost any faith, for in my opinion they never had any to lose. What they see is that they never had any. That's the case, I take it, with these fellows that have gone over now, some on 'em scared by Johnnie's proclamation, and some by the givin' up of old Ty. That was perfectly natural, it seems to me, and couldn't a been any different. But

what these fellows who have gone over showed, was that they were *always* on that side. It wasn't *going over* at all. They was on that side all the time, and now they've had a chance to show it; that's all."

For a half-hour the old friends conversed on the exciting topics of the times, and were interested listeners to the experiences each had to relate. Jairus, though he took no part in the conversation, was no less interested in what was said than were they, we may be well assured.

"But did Johnnie's proclamation scare a good many?" inquired Jeremiah at last.

"Yes, some, as I told ye. But a good many has stood firm, and like me don't think the last end's come yet, by a good deal. I've got something here," he added; and rising, and going to a high chest of drawers that was standing in the room, he unlocked one of the drawers and taking from it a paper brought it back with him, and throwing it upon the table, said: "There! That's somethin' that came to me yesterday, never mind how. It shows that there's somebody left yet who feels a little bit as I do, ye see, about this whole business."

Jeremiah spread the paper out on the table before him, and holding the candle in his hand so that its light would fall directly upon the words, read slowly aloud the following counterblast to Burgoyne's proclamation: —

"*To John Burgoyne, Esquire, Lieutenant-General of His Majesty's armies in America, Colonel of the*

Queen's regiment of light dragoons, Governor of Fort William in North America, one of the Representatives of the Commons of Great Britain, and commanding an army and fleet on an expedition from Canada," *etc.*

"MOST HIGH, MOST MIGHTY, MOST PUISSANT AND SUBLIME GENERAL: —

"When the forces under your command arrived at Quebec, in order *to act in concert and upon a common principle with the numerous fleets and armies, which all display in every quarter of America the justice and mercy of your King*, we, the reptiles of America, were struck with unusual trepidation and astonishment. But what words can express the plenitude of our horror when *the Colonel of the Queen's regiment of light dragoons* advanced towards Ticonderoga! The mountains shook before thee and the trees of the forests bowed their lofty heads. The vast lakes of the north were chilled at thy presence, and the mighty cataracts stopped their tremendous career, and were suspended in awe at thy approach. Judge, then, *O ineffable Governor of Fort William in North Britain!* what must have been the terror, dismay, and despair that overspread this paltry continent of America, and us, its wretched inhabitants. Dark and dreary, indeed, was the prospect before us, till, like the sun in the horizon, your most gracious, sublime, and irresistible proclamation opened the doors of mercy and snatched us, as it were, from the jaws of annihilation.

"We foolishly thought, blind as we were, that your gracious master's fleet and armies were come to destroy us and our liberties, but we are happy in hearing from you (and who can doubt what you assert?) that they were *called forth for the sole purpose of restoring the rights of the constitution to a froward and stubborn generation.*

"And is it for this, O sublime Lieutenant-General, that you have given yourself the trouble to cross the wide Atlantic, and with incredible fatigue traverse uncultivated wilds? And we ungratefully refuse the proffered blessing? To restore the rights of the constitution, you have called together an amiable host of savages, and turned them loose to scalp our women and children, and lay our country waste, — this they have performed with their usual skill and clemency; and we yet remain insensible of the benefit, and unthankful of so much goodness!

"Our congresses have declared independence, and our assemblies, as your highness justly observes, have most wickedly imprisoned the avowed friends of that power with which they are at war, and most PROFANELY compelled those whose consciences would not permit them to fight, to pay some small part towards the expenses their country is at in supporting what we call a necessary defensive war. If we go on thus in our obstinacy and ingratitude, what can we expect but that you should, in your anger, *give a stretch to the Indian forces under your direction, amounting to thousands, to overtake and destroy*

us; or, which is ten times worse, that you should withdraw your fleet and armies, and leave us to our own misery, without completing the benevolent task you have begun, *in restoring to us the rights of the constitution.*

"We submit, we submit, *most puissant Colonel of the Queen's regiment of light dragoons and Governor of Fort William in North Britain.* We offer our heads to the scalping-knife and our bellies to the bayonet. Who can resist the force of your eloquence? Who can withstand the terror of your arms? The invitation you have made in the *consciousness of Christianity, your royal master's clemency, and the honor of soldiership,* we thankfully accept. The blood of the slain, the cries of injured virgins and innocent children, and the never-ceasing sighs and groans of starving wretches in the jails and prison-ships of New York call on us in vain, whilst your sublime proclamation is sounded in our ears. Forgive us, O our country! Forgive us, dear posterity! Forgive us, all ye foreign powers who are anxiously watching our conduct in this important struggle, if we yield implicitly to the persuasive tongue of the most elegant *Colonel of Her Majesty's regiment of light dragoons.*

"Forbear then, thou magnanimous *Lieutenant-General!* Forbear to denounce vengeance against us! Forbear to *give a stretch to those restorers of constitutional rights,* the *Indian forces under your direction.* Let not *the messengers of wrath await us in*

the field, and devastation, famine, and every concomitant horror bar our return to the allegiance of a prince, who, by his royal will, would deprive us of every blessing of life, with all possible clemency.

"We are *domestic*, we are *industrious*, we are *infirm and timid;* we shall *remain quietly at home, and not remove our cattle, or corn, or forage*, in hopes that you will come at *the head of troops in the full power of health, discipline, and valor*, and take charge of them for yourselves. Behold our wives and daughters, our flocks and herds, our goods and chattels. Are they not at the mercy of our Lord the King, and of his *Lieutenant-General, member of the House of Commons, and Governor of Fort William in North Britain?*"

"Gum!" ejaculated Jeremiah when he had finished reading. "The fellow that wrote that knew a thing or two. He knew how to answer Johnnie Burgoyne in the way to appeal straight to the people of the frontier! Do you think that Burgoyne himself knew enough to write his own proclamation?"

"Doubtless, doubtless," replied Bryan. "Why, he's written three dramas, you know, and the man who can write three dramas and be the 'Colonel of the Queen's regiment of light dragoons' at the same time ought to be able to write such a proclamation as he sent out. Leastwise, so it seems to me."

"Burgoyne wrote three dramas!" said Jeremiah in surprise. "Neow, who ever heard the like o'

that? Why, he's worse than I thought. I could forgive him for using redskins, but to write dramas! Why, he must be the worst cavalier that ever lived. My mother raised me to hate the drama. I never read one in my life. I'd as soon think of celebrating Christmas, or keeping up any other relic of popery, as to read a play. What dramas did he write?" continued Jeremiah, unable to suppress entirely his curiosity, in spite of the additional horror the information that Burgoyne was the writer of dramas had brought.

"Oh, he wrote 'Bon Ton,' 'The Heiress,' and 'The Maid of the Oaks,'" replied Bryan. "But, Jeremiah, I guess ye needn't borrow trouble over the bad effects of any dramas Johnnie Burgoyne ever wrote. They'll never do much harm. I've heard as how they was put on the stage in Boston when Gage was there and they used to have such fearful times; but I guess, from what I've heard, that about all the people what went to see 'em did was laugh. No, I guess ye needn't borrow any trouble over what Johnnie'll do with his pen. It's what he may do with his sword that troubles me just at present. That's a horse of another color entirely."

"I thought you said you weren't afraid," interrupted Jairus.

"No more am I, my young friend," replied Bryan. "But I've heard as how another army is on the way up the Mohawk valley to join Burgoyne's forces. It's St. Leger's, I believe, and he's to call a lot of

Indians to add them to the forces he brought from Montreal to Oswego. Then he's going to take them all and start through the valley for Albany; and the plan, as I understand it, is for him to drive everything before him there, while Johnnie sweeps down this way, and they'll join forces at Albany. Then Clinton's to come up the Hudson and meet 'em and they'll split the colonies right in two, ye see, jest as I'm doin' with this apple; and then all they'll have to do will be to eat up each half as they want to."

And to illustrate his point, the scout split the apple he was holding in his hand in two portions and began to eat them.

Both Jairus and Jeremiah were sadly depressed by his words, and for a few moments there was silence. The light of the candle flickered, and Bryan snuffed it with his fingers. Darkness had swept down over the land, and as Jairus glanced out of the little windows, the sight was one which seemed to reflect the feelings of all within the house. The report of an additional army moving through the Mohawk valley was entirely new to him, and, added to the success which had attended Burgoyne's efforts thus far, seemed to dash the few slight hopes which yet remained in his heart.

"I'm tellin' ye," said Bryan, who was the first to break the silence, "that it isn't all over yet. I happen to know some things as well as others, and though I don't ask for it, you know as well as I do that both sides are tellin' me some things of impor-

tance; and I'm a tellin' you that the end hasn't come yet. A good beginning often makes a bad ending, and these generals of ours do their best when they are just put to it. Why, look at Trenton last winter, will ye? Who'd thought Washington ever could have got out of that hole, and yet he did get out. Now I'm tellin' ye that Phil Schuyler'll get out too; that is, if they'll get him a little help, and not nag the life out of him. Nagging is what kills folks, and generals, too. Yes, sir, nagging is worse than the plague, a hundred times worse."

"We're going to join his army at Fort Edward just as soon as we can get there," said Jeremiah.

"That'll settle it then," said Bryan dryly. "If Johnnie hears you've come, he'll turn tail in a hurry."

"We'll do our part," replied Jeremiah, unmoved by the friendly sarcasm of Alec.

"No doubt. No doubt," said Bryan quickly, for he had no desire to hurt the feelings of his friend. "But, Jerry, you know what I'm a doin' here, and just the position I occupy. Now I've just got word that some of the Tories hereabouts have collected a lot of supplies up the creek, and that they're going to take 'em to Burgoyne to-morrow mornin'. Leastwise, they're going to try to take 'em; but I have my doubts about their doin' it."

"Why? How'll you stop 'em? What can you do?" inquired Jeremiah.

"Oh, some of my friends and neighbors are goin'

to drop in here towards mornin', and I shouldn't be in the least bit surprised if they happened to surprise these fellows on their trip, or maybe before they get well started."

"Are ye going to go yourself?" asked Jeremiah. "When are ye going to start?"

"No, I'm not goin'. I can't, ye see, because of the peculiar place I hold, being in the confidence of both sides. But my friends are going, and I want both of you to go along with them, too."

"But we're on our way to Fort Edward," protested Jeremiah. "We want to get there just as soon as we can, and we ought not to stop for anything. I'd like to go in, but I don't see how we can, we're in such a hurry."

"'Twon't take long. They're goin' to meet here about two o'clock, and it'll be all over by morning. You'll go in, I know."

After some further conversation, both Jeremiah and Jairus agreed to join the party. They at once retired to a room to get such sleep as they could, while Bryan promised to call them in time to join the company.

It was about half-past two when the sleepers were summoned, and, hastily dressing, they went down the stairs and found about ten men in the public room.

Few words were spoken, and in a brief time the band left the tavern and started through the darkness for the place in which it was known the stores had been concealed.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RAID.

JAIRUS had not fully shared in the confidence Jeremiah appeared to feel in Alec Bryan. The scout was a stranger to him, and he did not even know him by reputation — a fact not in the least strange when it is remembered that Jairus was but little more than a lad, and had dwelt far from the abodes of his fellows. He believed in Jeremiah, however, and was trying to persuade himself that his companion must know better than he as to the true state of affairs in the region.

But Bryan was not to go with the little band, and his absence was what troubled Jairus. It was possible that they might be led into trouble, and the lad's heart was heavy when at last the door of the tavern was opened and the men stole forth into the darkness. The whispered consultation within the public room had not been heard by him, and he was all uncertain as to their destination or even as to the direction in which they were to go.

His thoughts were quickly recalled, and, keeping close to Jeremiah's side, he followed the men as they made their way through the forests. The

great trees and the heavy shadows served to increase his alarm; but he said nothing concerning his feelings, and steadily kept close to his companions.

Not a word was spoken now, but the leaders appeared to be familiar with the region, and to know their way. For two hours the march was unbroken, and then a halt was called. The light of the summer morning was beginning to appear. The songs of the birds filled the air, and there was that impression of damp freshness all about which is to be found in the forests at sunrise.

"It's right over here, not more than a quarter of a mile away now," said the leader. "You see," he added, speaking to Jeremiah, "the spot's a kind of a ravine on a little point by the bank of the creek. There's a hill just behind the place, and if there are not many of the Tories, we can form on the hill and rush down and either drive them into the water and make them surrender, or we can call out to them without being seen ourselves. Much will depend on the lay of the land and just how many are there."

"You're sure they're there, aren't you?" asked Jeremiah.

"No. All I know is what Alec said. He discovered the place and learned of the plan. In course, I don't know how he learned, and I don't know as I care. I'm sure Alec Bryan's right, though. He doesn't very often get fooled on such little things. It's all right, I know."

"If we're as close as ye say we are," said Jeremiah, "I think some one had better go ahead and see how it looks. That'll save us from any possible slip, ye see. He'd better go alone, though."

"That's a good suggestion," said the leader. "I'll go ahead myself. You all wait here and I'll be back before ye fairly know it, and I'll have something to report, too, never you fear."

The band all yielded to the suggestion, and the leader speedily disappeared from sight. The men waited in the place where they were then standing, a place shielded from sight by the high bushes and the great trees of the forest. They seldom spoke, and then only in whispers, for no one knew what lurking enemy might be near. It was known that many Indians were in the vicinity, for Bryan himself had said so, and more than once they had discovered signs of them on their early morning march.

"I wish we were out of this, Jeremiah," whispered Jairus. "I don't like the looks of things a little bit. I don't see what you wanted to stop for, anyway. We ought to have kept straight on for Fort Edward."

"My lad, I'm out of the army just because I wanted to help ye. Now I know what I'm doing, and ye must wait a bit for me now. It's only fair play, ye know. I want to go to Fort Edward as much as ye do, and ye won't be delayed long. Ye must have a little more patience. Are ye afraid?"

"I'm afraid of Bryan. Who knows whether he's all right or not?"

"I do."

"Well, I'll do my best," said Jairus; "but I'll own up that I should feel better if we were somewhere else."

Jairus was somewhat abashed by Jeremiah's quiet rebuke, and as he knew the soldier had gone with him because of his regard for his dead father, he tried not to be unmindful of the obligations he was under, and uttered no further protest.

Silence fell over the waiting band. The sun had now appeared, and the forest seemed to be clad in golden colors. The life of its inhabitants also appeared to have returned now, and birds and squirrels were seen on every side. If it had not been for the presence of his companions and the fear in his own heart, Jairus must have felt that peace reigned over all; for not a sign of an enemy, or of war, could be seen.

"There he comes," whispered Jeremiah, as he caught a glimpse of a man approaching through the forest.

In a few moments the leader was recognized, and as he rejoined the band the men crowded eagerly about him to learn what he had discovered.

"They're there and loading up," said the leader. "They've got five big wagons and there's a lot of the stuff, too. It's just as Alec Bryan said it was. He's a man, he is, and you can't get the best of him

if you do get up early in the morning. But they're a hard-looking crowd, that's what they are, if some of 'em are my neighbors."

"How many of them are there?" asked one of the band.

"That's the hard part of it. I counted thirty; that makes odds of three to one, ye see. I don't know as we had better try to drive 'em out, and yet I hate to give it up; and I know Alec won't like it if we do."

"What are they doing? Are they all armed? How are they arranged?" inquired Jeremiah quietly.

"Five of 'em are on guard, and the rest are loading up the wagons. They'll have it all done pretty quick, too."

"Only five on guard, you say? Of course they have muskets?" said Jeremiah.

"No doubt, and only three of us have rifles. Rifles don't grow on the bushes here, and we have to put up with fowling-pieces. What do you say, men? Shall we go back, or try to give 'em a scare?"

"Oh, don't go back! leastwise yet a while," said Jeremiah quickly. "You say there's a hill right behind the point where they are? How far is it from the top of it down to the creek?"

"About five or six rods, I should say. Not more than that, anyway."

"Well, then, why don't we get together on the top of the hill and when you say the word we'll make a break for the fellows? We can yell enough

for a hundred men, and if they've only got five men on guard, and the rest are working without guns, I think our yells will count for enough to drive 'em out. You say the road goes alongside the bed of the creek?"

"Yes; it's a kind of a road. It's where they'd have to go to carry off the stuff. I say, men, how do you feel about it? Shall we give it up, or make a trial of what Jeremiah suggests?"

One after another gave his opinion, and at last it was decided to follow Jeremiah's plan.

"We'll have to get about it, then, right away," said the leader, "or they'll be off and leave us in the lurch."

The men quickly formed and advanced stealthily towards the summit of the little hill. They crept from tree to tree, and frequently paused to observe if their presence had been discovered. They were all determined now, and although the venture seemed to be a desperate one, they were resolved to make an attempt to drive out the Tories. Even Jairus had forgotten his misgivings, and as he, too, stealthily crept forward, his excitement became each moment more and more intense. The very uncertainty itself increased the feeling, for he knew nothing of the locality.

He glanced at his companions and saw that they were evidently as excited as he. Only Jeremiah and the leader appeared to be calm, but as they led the way, stepping cautiously over the dead and fallen branches and glancing keenly about them, no

one would have thought from their appearance that they were on such a desperate errand as the one in which they were engaged.

At last the summit of the hill was gained, and, peering from behind the trees, the men could look down upon the point. The five men were on guard as the leader had reported, and the others were busily engaged in loading the wagons. No one was speaking, and they were evidently in great haste, although it also was apparent that they were not suspicious of an attack.

Jairus's heart was beating rapidly, and his breath came hard and fast. It did seem like a desperate venture, but the lad had no thought of drawing back now, and his suspicions of Alec Bryan were gone.

The leader raised his hand as a signal for all to listen to him, and passed from man to man whispering the words: "When I say 'Come on, boys!' start every one of you, and yell as if you had the lungs of a dozen men. We've got to yell, whatever else we do."

The men nodded their heads to show that they understood, and the leader stopped for a moment to look again at the Tories below.

They were plainly still unsuspicious of the threatened attack. The guards were leaning on their muskets, lazily watching their companions as they lifted the barrels into the wagons, or carried the heavy bundles from the ravine. The moment for action had arrived, and the leader turned and looked

for a moment at his own men and saw that all were waiting for the signal. Every man was grasping his gun and crouching low, and was ready to start down the hillside.

"Come on, boys!"

The leader shouted the signal, and in a moment a yell was heard in the forest that seemed to come from a hundred throats instead of from ten. As Jairus dashed down the hill with his companions, he was dimly aware that the noise was almost deafening. He saw the leader stop and wave his arms toward imaginary followers yet in the forest.

"Come on, boys! Come on, boys!" he kept shouting, and the rushing men before him redoubled their cries and whoops. Some discharged their guns, but the sound only added to the uproar.

The startled Tories gave one glance at the approaching men and for a moment stood as if they were spell-bound. The forests seemed to be filled with their enemies. Whoops, and calls, and shouts seemed to be heard on every side. And on the hillside stood a man continually shouting, "Come on, boys! Come on, boys!" The woods must be filled with their enemies, and plainly their only safety lay in instant flight.

And the flight was instantaneous. Dropping their bundles, the men fled swiftly up the rough roadway. Even the guards cast aside their guns, and did their utmost to keep up with their fleeing comrades. It seemed to them as if all of Schuyler's

army must be in pursuit, and that their only safety lay in the rapidity of their flight.

Some of them stumbled and fell directly in the pathway of others, who also fell headlong over their prostrate forms. They cast glances of terror behind them, but the multitude of the attacking party seemed to increase their alarm. They hastily arose and dashed forward, every man apparently being anxious to gain the van of the strange body. Meanwhile the shouts behind them seemed to increase, while that terrible cry, "Come on, boys!" still could be heard above the confusion and the occasional reports of the guns.

Had not the men been so terribly in earnest, the sight would have been ludicrous; but no one of the pursuers had either time or inclination to stop and laugh. At any moment the true condition might be discovered, and then the pursuers would become the pursued.

"Let's take after them. It's our only hope," said Jeremiah; and acting upon his suggestion, the band started in swift pursuit of the Tories.

It was a desperate thing to do, and perhaps if they had taken time to think, they would never have followed. Sometimes, however, it is wise to follow the first impression and not stop to consider all the possibilities of danger; and this was one of these occasions.

Still whooping, shouting, calling, and occasionally discharging their guns, the band started up the

rough road. Occasional glimpses of their foes could be caught, but the Tories were doing their utmost to distance their pursuers, and so excellent was the time they made that when the chase had been continued for the greater part of a mile, not one of them could be seen.

"It's time for us to go back," said Jeremiah, as the breathless band halted for a moment. "I'm thinkin' 'twas lucky for us that these fellows got away. If we'd caught 'em, we'd be in about the same fix as a man who caught a panther by the tail. He couldn't let go, and he didn't dare hang on."

Jeremiah had virtually become the leader of the band now, and his words were quickly heeded. All made their way rapidly back to the point and at once began to examine their plunder.

"There are no horses here," said Jeremiah, "as I can find. Those Tories must have expected them later. They probably were just loading up and were waiting for horses to come. Well, we can't wait for horses, for I'm afraid the men will come back. It's too bad we can't get this stuff away, but there's one thing we can do, and that is spile it for any one else. That's next best to havin' it ourselves. Come on, boys! Come on, boys!"

And, setting an example, Jeremiah broke in the head of one of the barrels of flour and quickly scattered its contents over the ground. In a moment all his companions were similarly engaged. The barrels were broken, the flour spilled over the

ground, and the bundles of provisions were soon all destroyed. The work of destruction occupied but a few moments, and a scene of ruin lay all about them.

"Here's something worth taking back with us," said Jeremiah, as he returned from the ravine, which he had just entered to satisfy himself that nothing of value remained. "Here's some guns," and as he spoke he threw upon the ground a musket he had found, and quickly returned to the ravine for more.

His example here was also speedily followed, and in a brief time twenty-five guns were brought forth and cast together in a heap on the ground. Satisfied that there were now no more remaining, and that all the stores had been destroyed, the men assembled for a hurried consultation.

It was quickly decided that the guns should be divided among the men, and that then the band should separate, and each man return at once to his own home.

Jeremiah selected two of the best of the guns and gave them to Jairus, and then selecting two more, took them himself, and with his young friend, after bidding adieu to his companions, started quickly back towards the tavern of Alec Bryan. They met with no one on their way, and by the middle of the afternoon arrived at the place.

The scout was not at home when they returned, and they seated themselves in the public room while waiting for his return, meanwhile talking over the exciting events of the morning.

A half-hour had passed and the step of some one was heard upon the piazza.

"Here he comes," said Jeremiah.

The door was opened, but instead of Alec Bryan an Indian in his war-paint entered the room. He was an immense man and his head almost seemed to touch the beams in the low room. The two men gazed at him in astonishment, but Jairus's mind was not calmed when he recognized the huge savage as none other than the Panther. Nor were his fears relieved when he saw that the recognition was mutual, and that the Panther evidently knew him.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BATTLE IN THE RAVINE.

WHILE Samuel and his companion, the Irishman Timothy Murphy, were creeping stealthily through the grass in the dim light, they saw another man moving in the same direction.

The impulsive lad was about to level his gun at the stranger, when Timothy quickly touched his arm and whispered, "It's the barefut."

Only partially convinced that the man was not an enemy, Samuel lowered his gun; but they soon saw that it was, indeed, their barefooted companion, and that he was moving in the same direction in which they were going. Their own presence was discovered by Benson at about the same time, and he, too, might have done as Samuel had been about to do, for all were in a highly nervous state, had not Timothy suddenly arisen from his crouching position and, bursting into a hearty laugh, exclaimed: "Be jabbers, and we kilt him entoirely. The baste moight have known better nor that. He's got his just dasarts for comin' prowlin' around any o' Morgan's band. Sarved him right, or me name's not Timothy Murphy."

All three were standing together now, and gazing down upon the body of the enemy that had been heard stealthily approaching their hiding-place. Before them lay a dead buck. It was his steps which they had heard. Perhaps he had scented their presence, and had stamped his feet in anger or in the expectation of calling forth some manifestation from a foe he had suspected to be near. His efforts certainly had been successful and had awakened the sleeping men, and he had received the shot of all three guns.

"If it takes three guns to kill one deer, how many will it take to whip the army of Johnnie Burgoyne?" asked Timothy. His face now beamed with good nature, and as he stood before him, in the light of that early morning, Samuel thought he had never seen a man like unto him before.

"We've no time to waste on your questions, Timothy," replied Benson soberly. "We must hasten back to Fort Edward with the information we have gained. We've seen enough to know what Johnson and his red villains are up to, and we must put forth at once."

"Oi hear yez," responded Timothy, "but ye don't mean to insist that we shall go without tryin' to find a bit of somethin' to ate. Why, Providence itself has sint yez yer breakfast, and 'twould be almost temptin' that same to put it by. There's a cry from me sowl, though it may be from me stomach, come to think of it, which can't be satisfied at

all, at all, without a bit of a venison steak. Sure, and ye don't mean to say we ought to be travellin' before we've cooked a slice or two? 'Twould be almost temptin' Providence, that it would."

"We must wait for nothing," said Benson solemnly, "and besides, a fire would tempt Providence far more than going without your breakfast, to say nothing of tempting the redskins we know to be all about here."

"Oi'm thinkin' ye'll have it yer own way," replied Timothy without losing his good nature, and not unmindful of the danger of kindling a fire. "Well, thin, the sooner we put out, the sooner we'll git there. What are we waitin' for here anyway, Oi'd loike to know? Why don't we start? Oi'm just dyin' to be on the way agin."

"We'll start now," replied Benson, immediately shouldering his gun and leading the way.

His companions at once followed him, although Samuel shared in Timothy's longing for a piece of broiled venison steak. But he, too, realized the necessity of haste and the danger that might arise from the smoke being seen; and so he, too, made no protest.

The barefooted leader again seemed to know no need of rest, and when, late in the afternoon, the three men arrived at Fort Edward, Samuel was so nearly exhausted that he felt but slight curiosity to look about him, at the men and defences of the American army. He eagerly ate the supper which

Timothy prepared and then stretched himself upon the ground in the Irishman's quarters, and slept as only a tired boy can.

The next morning he felt greatly refreshed, and after breakfast looked about the place, eagerly examining the fortifications, which to him seemed almost impregnable. He could not understand the misgivings of Timothy, who went the rounds with him.

"The gineral did the bist he could, no doubt aboot that," Timothy said, "but me name's not Timothy Murphy, if such works can iver kape out the murderin' ridcoats. And Oi'm hearin' as how Johnnie is a coomin' through the swamp at the rate of a mile a day. That manes that he'll soon be furnishin' Timothy Murphy, of Daniel Morgan's dragoons, a good mark. Be jabbers, and Oi'm after hopin' he can't shoot back."

Great was the astonishment in the camp a little later when it was learned that General Schuyler had decided to evacuate Fort Edward and drop back to Stillwater. The murmurings of some of the soldiers almost rose into threatenings, at what they were pleased to call the "cowardice" of the leader. He was called a "Tory," a "coward," a "weakling"; but Philip Schuyler, true, dignified, and strong, bore all without a murmur. He knew then, what we all know now, that Fort Edward was in no condition to withstand an attack from Burgoyne's forces.

Besides, an engagement in an open field, or among the trees of the forest, would give the Americans many advantages, and such a position would also deprive the British and Hessians, unaccustomed as they were to warfare on the frontier, of much of their strength.

Philip Schuyler was a sensitive man, but a man of noble spirit, and while doubtless he suffered keenly from the unjust criticisms of his companions in arms, his character was too strong to suffer him to change his purpose when he knew, as he did at the time, that he was acting for the best. Keen as his sufferings then were, they were soon to be much keener; for the injustice of the feelings with which some of the men in the camp regarded him were as nothing compared with the injustice with which Congress soon acted towards him. And of that we shall soon hear.

Meanwhile we must stop to trace a few of the events which rapidly followed now, in each army. When Washington had learned of the fall of Fort Ticonderoga, he had quickly despatched Benedict Arnold to give such aid as lay within his power to the army in the North.

Arnold lingered a little in Philadelphia, begging of Congress to give him back once more his rank, relative to the five men who had been promoted over him. This, Congress unwisely refused to do, and Arnold, now thoroughly angry, delayed no longer, but hastened at once to Schuyler.

His arrival was at a time when General Schuyler was suffering from fresh assaults from his own men, and seldom in the history of our land, or of any land for that matter, has a true hero suffered more, or more unjustly, from the ignorance and prejudice of the very men whom he was striving most to aid. Yet the noble-hearted Schuyler has not been the only man to suffer in that manner. From the days of the Nazarene, few men have tried to aid or benefit their fellows without being reviled and persecuted for his efforts. People complain of their surroundings and conditions; and yet they dislike to be disturbed. They are prone to look suspiciously at any one who would lead them, thinking, first of all, that he has some selfish end in view. Most true men are in advance of their fellows, and only the later generations do them honor. The old couplet, concerning the greatest of all the poets, reads: —

> Seven cities contend for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread.

It is a great thing, as well as a good thing, for a man to be able to recognize the prophets, teachers, leaders, of his own age, and be ready to do them the honor which coming generations will surely offer.

The increased perplexity of Philip Schuyler at the time when Arnold entered the camp, came about in this fashion. St. Leger, as we already know, had landed his forces at Oswego and was pushing his way up the Mohawk valley, prepared to

unite with Burgoyne, Horn, and Clinton, all of whom, it was hoped, would make their way to Albany.

Sir John Johnson with his regiment of Tories, known as the Royal Greens, was doing all in his power to aid St. Leger by stirring up the Indians to join him. In this he was partially successful.

The Mohawks under their great chief, Thayendanega (Bundle of Sticks), or, as he was more familiarly known, Joseph Brant, had rallied to the support of the British. Some of the Cayugas and Senecas also joined St. Leger, but the Onondagas, Oneidas, and Tuscaroras refused the offers, and even gave aid to the Americans. Doubtless, the influence of the saintly missionary, Samuel Kirkland, had had much to do with holding back these latter tribes.

St. Leger now had about seventeen hundred men in his band, and pushed his way through the forest until he arrived near Fort Stanwix, then on the very borders of civilization. It was a fort which had been built in 1758, on the watershed between the Hudson and Lake Ontario, and on the direct line of traffic and travel between New York and Upper Canada.

But the Americans were not disheartened. Six hundred men were in the fort under the command of Colonel Peter Gansevoort, and down through the valley the German settlers were rallying under the standard of General Nicholas Herkimer, a man, at that time, sixty years of age, and the commander of the militia of that vast region which was then known as Tryon county.

The garrison at Fort Stanwix had laughed at the demand of St. Leger to surrender; for, doubtless, they were not entirely ignorant of the movements of General Herkimer's little army of eight hundred men who were marching to their relief. Indeed, the plan already formed was for General Herkimer to fall upon St. Leger's men from behind, while the garrison of the fort was to advance upon them in front at the same time. To make sure that no mistake should be made, Colonel Gansevoort was to fire three guns at the fort as soon as Herkimer's messengers were received by him, and then the sturdy general was to fall upon the rear of St. Leger's force, while Gansevoort's men planned to keep up a firing, to hold their attention in front.

The scheme was a bold one and shrewd, but for its success it depended upon there being absolutely no mistake made in the time of beginning the attack or in the coöperation of the two divisions.

Herkimer's messengers ought to have arrived at the fort by three o'clock in the morning of August 5th, for his army was near now. But hour after hour passed, and the signal was not heard.

Herkimer's militia began to complain. They did more; for they began to quarrel among themselves, and even to taunt the old general with cowardice. They did not know that the messengers were still two hours from the fort, nor were they aware that St. Leger's active Indian scouts had already learned of the presence of the advancing army, and that the

Royal Greens and Joseph Brant's Indians were advancing to meet them.

Something like two miles west of Oriskany, there was a large, deep ravine directly across the road. Thayendanega at once saw what a position it was for an ambuscade, and soon his men lay concealed there, waiting with all confidence for Herkimer's men to come.

And to come, they were soon; for the sturdy old general could not bear the taunts of the soldiers, and biting his pipe-stem in two in his anger, gave the word for the army to advance.

At ten o'clock, the main body of the over-confident band descended into the ravine, the baggage wagons following them closely, while the rear guard was yet behind.

In a moment there was a deafening sound of guns, as the Royal Greens came charging down from in front upon the unsuspecting men, and at the same time the Indians with frightful yells rushed in from behind and cut off the men in the ravine from the aid of the rear guard.

The main body were at once thrown into confusion by the sudden attack, but they quickly formed in a circle, and made ready to meet the enemy, who entirely surrounded them.

What a sight that was upon which the August sun that morning looked down! Fifteen hundred men were struggling in that deep ravine. Cries, shouts, and screams rose on the air, mingled with

the whoops of the savages, and the reports of the guns. Men were fighting hand to hand. They slipped and slid in the mire; they grasped one another by the throat; they used their guns as clubs; they thrust with their bayonets. Men fell together, each still grasping in death the knives that had taken their lives. Even the worst horrors of war have seldom been equal to these that were seen in that ravine on that morning.

General Herkimer's horse was shot from under him, and he himself had his leg shattered by a ball; but, taking his saddle, he placed it against a tree, and, seating himself there and lighting his pipe, he smoked and shouted his orders to his struggling followers.

Soon the heavens themselves grew black. The heavy clouds rolled up, and rain, and lightning, and the deep rolls of the thunder were all added to the horror of the scene. The trees swayed under the strong wind, the rifles were soon wet and useless, and bayonet, and knife, and hatchet and brawny fist were now the only weapons.

The Indians soon began to flee, and the Tories to retreat; but, although Herkimer's men held the ground, they could not pursue their enemies.

The storm had now passed, and, with the return of the sunshine, the sounds of guns in the distance were heard. Colonel Gansevoort had at last received the messengers, and, at once suspecting the cause of the uproar he could hear in the distance,

had sent forth Colonel Willett and his men to the aid of his countrymen. The Tories and Indians were driven back, and three times seven wagons were loaded with the spoils of the battle and carried, by the Americans, into Fort Stanwix. Five British standards, all of Sir John Johnson's papers, and plans of the campaign, as well as food, drink, ammunition, tools, and blankets, fell into the hands of the victors.

When the brave Colonel Willett reëntered the fort, he raised aloft the five standards of the British, and above them he hoisted a flag which he had made of an old blue jacket and some strips torn from the red petticoat which the wife of a soldier had given. It is thought by many that this was the first time the "stars and stripes" were ever flung to the breeze — on that day of the battle of Oriskany, August 6th, 1777.

It was a terrible battle. General Herkimer died a few days afterwards, but it is said that the sturdy old general, when the end came, was propped up in bed by pillows, and was calmly smoking his long Dutch pipe and reading the thirty-eighth psalm.

Few wounded men survived the struggle; for it was a fight to the death, and it is claimed that each side lost nearly one-third of its numbers. The Indians soon after began to desert St. Leger, and the British leaders were sadly crippled; but the end was not yet.

The report of the condition in the Mohawk val-

ley had come to General Schuyler, and he was besought to send some aid. The brave commander well knew the importance of holding Fort Stanwix, and all the motives of humanity also combined to make him wish to aid his struggling comrades in their peril out on the border of the wilderness.

But when he called a council of war, many of his own officers opposed him. He must not weaken their forces then, for they were in peril, too, the officers said. Indeed, this remark was whispered by one officer so loudly that Schuyler could hear it. He could endure the taunts of being a Tory and a coward, but when he heard this, he bit the stem of the pipe in his mouth in two, as Herkimer had done before him, and as it fell on the floor and was broken, he exclaimed: "Enough! I assume the whole responsibility. Where is the brigadier who will go?"

The officers were sullenly silent, until Benedict Arnold suddenly stood up, and said: "Here! Washington sent me here to make myself useful. I will go."

The drums quickly beat to arms, and soon twelve hundred of the New England men, who admired the dash and bravery of Arnold, had offered to follow him; and, with the man who afterwards forfeited his good name by his traitorous deeds, they left the army to go to the relief of Fort Stanwix and its garrison.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A STRUGGLE WITH THE HESSIANS.

WHATEVER Benedict Arnold did, he did with his might, mind, and strength, and when he started on his march through the Mohawk valley, he gave neither the men nor himself any rest. For seven days they pushed on without pausing, drawn forward by the hope of relieving their friends and countrymen, whom they knew to be beset by many perils, and cut off from aid, unless they themselves should bring it. But the new roads were rough, and the progress, in spite of all the leader's energy, was slow, and when the week had passed, Arnold found himself still twenty miles from Fort Stanwix.

His fear now was that the garrison would become disheartened at the failure of aid to come, and surrender to the besieging army of St. Leger. The eagerness and sympathy of Arnold's men were of less value than their presence, and that was something the garrison did not yet have, and, perhaps, did not know was so near.

Arnold's shrewd mind hit upon an expedient in this crisis that accomplished far more than he hoped.

A number of Tory spies had been captured in the march through the valley, and, among them, was a well-grown lad, a man in size, but who was half-witted. He was not entirely foolish, however; for his cunning had been shown already in many ways, and his very foolishness had made the Indians look up to him as one not to be trifled with. Indeed, they always looked upon a crazy person or a fool as one under the special guardianship of the Great Spirit, a feeling not entirely unknown, perhaps, among peoples who call themselves civilized; for the outlandish, the strange, and the sensational are almost always sure of a following.

This half-witted young Tory spy was named Yan Yost Cuyler, and he had been condemned to be hanged. It is doubtful whether Arnold really intended to carry out the sentence or not; but, be that as it may, it served his present purpose to pretend to be ready to do so, at any rate, and the rumor soon spread not only through the army, but among the people of the region, that Yan Yost was to die.

Almost beside themselves, the foolish boy's mother and brother, not very much better in their wits than Yan Yost himself, hastened into the camp and began to plead with Arnold to spare the life of the unfortunate lad.

The leader, for a time, pretended not to listen; but, at last, apparently worn out by the pleadings, he said that if Yan Yost would go into the camp of St. Leger and do exactly as the American com-

mander bade him, he would spare his life. The spy's brother was to be detained in the camp, however, and in case Yan Yost failed in his project, why then the brother was to be hanged in his stead.

The three members of the Cuyler family eagerly agreed to the proposal. Arnold sent several Oneida Indians along with Yan Yost, who speedily left the American army and departed on their way. In Yan Yost's coat a dozen or more bullet-holes had been made, and he had been carefully told just what he was to do and say. As it happened, that very day some of St. Leger's Indian scouts had brought him word of the coming of a great American host, and while the British leaders were consulting, for the commander hastily called them together when he received the word, Yan Yost himself came running into the camp.

He was well known by many of the soldiers, for he had been a frequent visitor in the camp, and now the torn coat on his back, and the terror apparently stamped upon his face, told a story of their own. He was quickly brought before St. Leger, and his tale of his adventure with the great host of American soldiers, who were near and rapidly advancing, was soon told.

When the British general inquired as to the numbers of the enemy, Yan Yost, apparently breathless, only pointed up to the thousands of leaves upon the trees of the forest.

The gesture was as threatening as it was signifi-

cant, and in a moment the rumor spread throughout the army that Burgoyne had been defeated and that the Americans were close at hand, bent upon the destruction of St. Leger's forces.

The Indians, who had remained after the battle of Oriskany, at once began to leave the camp. Both St. Leger and Sir John Johnson begged and pleaded with them to remain, and some did; but they broke open the casks of rum and soon began to attack the redcoats themselves. The Tories joined in the riot, and all night long the scene in St. Leger's camp was one that baffles description. Songs, whoops, cries, fights, were on every side, and when the morning light came, St. Leger and his men hastily started from the camp for Oswego, leaving behind them the most of their stores and provisions.

This was the opportunity for Colonel Gansevoort, and the little garrison of Fort Stanwix sallied forth to gain the spoils. Cannon, ammunition, and tents all became theirs. Some even kept up the pursuit of St. Leger all the way to Oswego, and, not altogether to their credit be it said, were aided by some of the very Indians who had been with the British, but who were quick to turn now to what they thought was the winning side; and when at last the crestfallen St. Leger sailed away on the lake, only a remnant of his army remained to go with him. Fort Stanwix was saved, and Arnold returned to the American army near the Hudson.

Meanwhile, another event had occurred, which

troubled Burgoyne even more than the repulse of St. Leger, and increased the danger which was daily becoming greater and threatening to overwhelm the boastful leader.

Among the Green Hills of Vermont was the little village of Bennington. There, the patriotic country people had been collecting stores, horses, ammunition, and various other necessities of war.

Word of all this was brought John Burgoyne, who at once decided it would be a grand thing to disperse the rebels there and appropriate their possessions to his own use; for the question of supplies for his army was fast becoming a pressing one. Accordingly, he sent a force of five hundred Hessians under Colonel Baum, and with them a hundred Indians and Tories, to gain possession of the stores at Bennington, and scatter the assembled rebels. Why Burgoyne should have sent so small a force, and one composed largely of men entirely unfamiliar with the country and the frontier methods of warfare, has always been a matter of surprise to some; but the truth probably is that he relied upon the word of some of his Tory friends, who explained to him that the men of the region were only waiting for a favorable opportunity to flock to his standard. How true this was, we may judge from the fact that Colonel Baum soon sent back for reinforcements, and another body, of five hundred Hessians and two cannon, was quickly sent forward to his aid.

And he needed them badly; for Colonel John

Stark was in command of the militia at Bennington, one of the bravest men of the Revolution. Already he had taken an active part in the battles at Bunker Hill, Trenton, and Princeton, but he too, like the leader of the Americans in the expedition for the relief of Fort Stanwix, had not received the promotion he thought he deserved, and had gone back home to Vermont to have nothing more to do with the war.

The approach of Burgoyne's army, the danger that threatened, and the care of the militia that quickly assembled, soon brought him out again; and declaring now that he would not take orders from any man, he accepted the position of leader.

Colonel Seth Warner and his brave men, who had fought so well at Hubbardton, soon joined him, and, daily, recruits came to his camp.

The Hessians had begun to throw up entrenchments along a shallow little stream known as the Walloomsac. The rain fell in torrents while the sturdy Germans were working, and John Stark smiled grimly; for he knew the next morning would disclose the plans he had in mind.

During the night more New England men joined Stark's forces, and in the morning the storm had ceased. It was a hot, sultry August day, not the best kind of a day for a struggle, but far worse for the Hessians than for their enemies. The morning passed and the attack was not begun, but the men were not idle. The New England farmers, in small

squads or divisions, were passing around to the rear of the Hessian position, and we now know that many of them were seen by Colonel Baum, but he gave little heed to them, as they wore no uniforms and he never saw many together. Whenever he had fought in the old country, he had always seen men in bright-colored uniforms and moved in stately marches and in large divisions. These little squads of countrymen he never thought of as enemies, and so worked steadily on, ignoring them all.

By afternoon, five hundred or more of these apparently harmless men were behind him, while John Stark with a still larger force lay before. Suddenly the men in the rear of the Hessians began an attack. They were all good marksmen, and before their sudden and deadly fire the Hessians were thrown in instant confusion, while the Indians quickly ran for the woods.

The Hessians, however, began a desperate defence, but the American men in front advanced also to the attack.

Colonel Stark had pointed his sword at the redoubt of the enemy, and facing his own men had called out: —

"There, my lads, are the Hessians! To-night our flag floats over yonder hill or Molly Stark is a widow!" And his men had responded with a shout and a dash that promised well.

The hills shut out the view of the movements of the Americans from the Hessian colonel, who ap-

parently had no thought of leaving his entrenchments and going forth on the open ground to do battle. Again and again he plied the Americans with grape and musketry, but he did not seem to be able to make any impression upon the attacking parties. They appeared to be on every side of him at once. They were forming a circle and gradually closing in upon the Hessians.

The battle became fiercer and fiercer. The farmers were not afraid of the Hessians' cannon and even charged up to the very muzzle of their guns. For an hour the doughty Hessian colonel kept up the struggle, but then it was seen that his fire was beginning to slacken. He had been hoping all the time that their reinforcements, for which he had sent, and which he knew had left Burgoyne's camp, would come to his aid; but he waited in vain, for the help did not come.

As soon as the Americans perceived that the fire was slackening and the defence apparently becoming weaker, they rushed close up and clambered over the breastworks and poured into the redoubts.

But the brave Hessians, for they were brave and were fighting with the energy born of despair, were not yet willing to give up. The long range was gone now, and the contest became hand to hand. The Hessians threw away their muskets and bayonets, and drew their broadswords and rushed to meet the oncoming enemy. They were not look-

ing for victory now, only hoping to be able to cut their way through and escape from the place.

But that hope was soon abandoned, for there were too many of the Americans for them to be pushed back or overborne. The end had come, and Hessians, Tories, and Canadians alike surrendered. There was no doubt about the victory thus far.

The Americans were wild with delight. A few rushed back to Bennington, where every man, woman, and child assembled there were awaiting the issue in fear and trembling. Household goods had been carried out of the houses and loaded upon wagons ready to depart at a moment's warning. Women and children stood in the streets holding one another by the hand and listening to the sounds of those awful guns only six miles away, where their fathers, and brothers, and sons were struggling for life far more than for liberty. It is needless to attempt to picture the joy which the words of the messengers produced.

But most of the Americans were yet busy on the battlefield. The ranks were broken, and the men were scattered in every direction, some eager to gain the booty, some caring for the wounded, and some searching for the dead, while others were guarding the prisoners. It seemed as if complete demoralization had seized upon the entire band of patriots, and yet the Hessian reinforcements were close at hand. They had delayed long on the way,

but the end of their journey had come. Before the startled Americans fairly realized what was occurring, the advancing Hessians were upon them. Their discipline and training now began to assert themselves, and in unbroken lines they came on. At first the Americans, who had quickly rallied, were pushed backward, but Warner's men with fresh reinforcements had also come to their aid, and their approach gave Stark and his men an opportunity to form themselves and take fresh courage.

Again the former tactics were followed. The Americans began to encircle the Hessians, and their firing was sure and deadly. Colonel Stark also brought one of the captured Hessian cannons to bear upon the advancing foe. The thought of losing what they had already gained gave the Americans fresh courage. They held their own, then steadily began to advance, firing all the time. Soon they were so near that the opposing lines could see the faces in front of them. The Hessians were falling on every side and there was no one to come to their aid now. Their horses were shot down, the artillery was useless, and the darkness was fast approaching.

It was now the turn of the Hessians to fall back, and the falling back soon turned into a flight. Their guns were abandoned, and every man was looking after his own safety. But the Americans were much exhausted by the two battles within so brief a time, and as it was also now so dark that

they could not distinguish friend from foe, they soon gave up the pursuit, satisfied to hold the ground which now they had taken twice in one afternoon.

And what had they gained? Four cannon, one thousand stands of arms, one thousand dragoon swords, and seven hundred prisoners; while more than two hundred of the Hessians lay dead upon the field. The American loss was fourteen killed and forty-two wounded.

And the effect of the battle upon the Americans was best of all: for it had shown that farmers and frontiersmen could be a match for the best-trained soldiers in the world.

When the scattered Hessians at last made their way back into Burgoyne's camp, it was a sad story they had to tell. Their loss had been great, and the perplexities of the commander were greatly increased.

The question of supplies was becoming a serious one, and meanwhile no word from Howe or Clinton had been received. He had not only lost the supplies which he had hoped to gain at Bennington, but the effect of the battle there was to send the wavering men into the American camp, instead of into his own.

As for Colonel John Stark, his wife was not made a widow then, and we know that his insubordination was soon forgiven and he received the longed-for commission of brigadier-general. It was as true then, as it is now, that nothing succeeds like success.

Such was the condition of affairs, and such were the happenings on the left and right of the two main armies, after Samuel Goodwin reached the camp; and while his uncertainty as to his mother and brother increased through all these days, he had little time to think of himself amidst these stirring scenes.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RETURN OF THE PANTHER.

As the Panther stood in the doorway, both Jairus and Jeremiah could see the look of intense hatred that shot forth from his eyes, and as it also became at once apparent that he was partially intoxicated, they knew that their own position was one of great danger. They had both left their guns in the adjoining room, for neither had had any thought of the approach of an enemy, and as they looked at the huge Indian, they realized quickly that a desperate encounter was before them.

Jeremiah made a slight movement as if he were about to leave his chair, as indeed he was, for he had thought to gain possession of his gun by a sudden departure from the room; but he was held in his seat by the movements of the Indian.

With a yell that almost caused their hearts to stop beating, the Panther suddenly with one hand drew his tomahawk from his belt, and with the other grasped his long, keen scalping-knife, and with a bound stood directly before them.

His eyes seemed to flash fire, and turning alter-

nately from one to the other, he began to swing his tomahawk and flourish his knife as if he were in the very act of tearing the scalp from some helpless victim.

His motions were incredibly swift, and as he danced about, and flourished his weapons, he shouted: "Me great warrior. Panther great chief. Me no scalp um squaw. Me no scalp um Jenny M'Crea. Me kill um paleface! Me kill um boy! Young paleface no more hit um big chief! Me Panther! Me big chief!"

Jairus and Jeremiah seemed almost spellbound. They were without any weapons of defence, and the slightest movement on the part of either served to direct the attention of the furious Indian to him.

Not for a moment did he cease his threatening motions. He leaped and danced about the room, ever keeping his flashing eyes upon the men, and swinging his arms with such rapid motions that it was almost impossible to follow him. Jeremiah expected each moment that the tomahawk or the knife would be thrown.

With an agony that almost shut off his breath, the lad gazed at the leaping, shouting warrior, unable to turn his eyes away from the frightful sight, and yet feeling sick and faint as he watched the movements of the Panther, whose rage and excitement seemed to increase each moment.

"Me no kill um squaw! Me no scalp white squaw! Me kill um young paleface!" shouted the

Panther, advancing upon Jairus as he spoke; and the lad thought his own last moment had come.

But quickly turning from him, the warrior faced Jeremiah, and shouted in tones that might have been heard far away: "Me great warrior. Me take hundred, tousan scalps! Me scalp um *so!*" and he brought his knife, as he spoke, within a few inches of the white man's head.

It seemed to Jairus as if he were in some frightful dream. He could not speak or cry out. His tongue felt dry and parched, and his eyes seemed to be starting out of his head. He knew the Panther had recognized him, and doubtless felt that the time to avenge the blow Jairus had given him weeks before with the paddle, when he had tried to seize the canoe in which the lad was escaping, had come.

"Me big Indian! Me great chief! Me no scalp um white squaw! Me kill um warrior! Me take um paleface scalp, me no take um white squaw's scalp! The Panther is a man! Me big chief!" still shouted the excited Indian.

Why he did not strike them, Jairus could not understand. Perhaps he was doing all this to prolong their agony and increase their suffering, as a cat sometimes seems to take delight in tormenting or playing with some helpless bird or mouse which has become its victim.

Jairus had not even glanced at his companion, as his entire attention seemed to be fastened upon the

leaping, dancing, shouting, furious savage before him, in whose power they seemed to be helpless.

But Jeremiah was a powerful man, although he was not nearly so large as the huge Indian; and after the first astonishment and fear at the movements of the Panther had gone, he began coolly to consider what might be done. To leave his chair was impossible, for the slightest movement on his part would make the furious savage fling his knife or tomahawk. And yet something must be done. To sit there quietly and wait for the Indian to prolong the agony and take his own time for their destruction was impossible.

Jeremiah soon perceived that the very chair in which he was seated would be no mean weapon of itself, but how to use it before the knife could be thrown was the problem to be solved. The old soldier was alert now, and each time when the Panther turned towards Jairus, he moved his arms back a trifle, and his hands came nearer to the back of the chair. But the moment for action had not yet come.

"Me big chief!" shouted the Panther. "Me no scalp um white squaw! Me no kill um Jenny M'Crea! Me kill um paleface man! Me scalp um paleface warrior! Me take um young paleface scalp *so!*" and again the savage warrior, standing before the pale and trembling Jairus, went through the motions of scalping his victim. This time he came still closer, and Jairus closed his eyes, feeling that now the end had come.

When he opened them, he saw that Jeremiah had suddenly leaped to his feet, and swung the chair in which he had been seated high above his head. The Indian saw it too, and with a yell turned to meet the attack.

Jeremiah had grasped the heavy wooden chair by the back and had swung it above him, and was just in the act of bringing it down upon the Indian's head when Jairus first opened his eyes and saw him.

The lad gazed at his companion in helpless agony. It was but a moment of time, and yet would Jeremiah be quick enough to prevent the thrust of the knife which the Panther was preparing to give? The soldier's face was set and hard, and he had put forth all his strength in the blow.

The room in which they were was low, and along the ceiling ran the heavy beams and timbers of the house, so low that he could almost touch them with his uplifted hand when he was standing erect. And there stood Jeremiah before him, with the chair held back over his head, and the Indian prepared to spring upon him.

Down came the chair, with all the strength Jeremiah could put into the blow; but the leg of it struck against the low beams, and with a louder yell the Panther easily dodged the strange weapon and turned quickly to rush upon his assailant.

But Jeremiah instantly raised the chair aloft once more, and as the Panther leaped towards him, this

time he brought it squarely down upon the head and shoulders of the infuriated savage. The blow was too much even for the huge Indian to withstand, and he sank upon the floor.

"Come, Jairus, help me!" called Jeremiah, as he dropped the chair and sprang upon the Indian, who at once was striving to rise to his feet again.

The lad instantly responded, and then began a terrible struggle for the possession of the knife and tomahawk. Over and over upon the floor rolled the three contestants. Sometimes one was upon the top of the struggling mass, and then another would gain the advantage for a moment. The chair was broken, and the room resounded with the sounds of the contest. The breathing of the men could easily have been heard. All that is evil in man seemed to be stamped upon their faces. They struggled, they struck, they kicked, and rolled over and over upon the floor.

At last Jairus managed to hold one leg of the warrior to the floor, and throwing himself upon it grasped the other with both his arms. At the same time Jeremiah cast himself upon the warrior's chest, and with a mighty effort grasped each of his wrists and held them on the floor before him. The Panther lay stretched out, with two men sitting upon him, and his hands, in each of which he still held a weapon, fastened to the floor. The panting Jeremiah looked down into the evil face beneath him and shuddered as he tightened his grasp; for never

before had he seen such complete hatred expressed on any countenance.

The contest in a sense was ended, but the victors did not know what to do with the victory they had won. Neither of them dared to move, and the slightest relaxation of their grasp would give an advantage to the Indian, who to all appearances was much less wearied by the struggle than was either of his captors.

Suddenly Jeremiah shouted, "Help! Help! Will some one come and help us?"

At the words the Panther again began to struggle, but his efforts were unavailing, as he was still held in the grasp of the men.

They waited several moments, but their call was not heeded, and, indeed, Jairus could not think of any one who would be likely to come to their aid. Alec Bryan was away from home, and their only hope lay in the arrival, as he thought, of some passing stranger, who might be as likely to take the part of the Panther as he would their own. Must they remain where they were and trust to such chance aid as might come? And yet he could think of no way by which they might secure their captive; for it would not be safe for either to release his grasp in the least, even for an instant.

"Can I do anything to help you?"

Both Jeremiah and Jairus glanced quickly up at the sound, and saw standing in the doorway of the public room a young girl, apparently about eighteen

years of age. Her eyes were filled with wonder at the strange sight before her, and the terror which it had first inspired apparently had not entirely disappeared.

"Ah, my lass," said Jeremiah quickly, "that ye can! Run and get a rope. Get it as quickly as possible," he added, as the Panther once more renewed his struggles to free himself. His captors had all they could do for a time to retain their hold; but they had succeeded when the girl returned, bringing a coil of rope in her hands.

"Try and see if you can't wrench this tomahawk and knife out of his hands," gasped Jeremiah. "I can hold them so he can't hurt you."

The girl approached and tried to carry out his suggestion, but her efforts were unavailing. "I can't do it," she said. "He holds them too tight. I can't move them."

"Then slip the rope around his feet. Make a slip-noose," gasped Jeremiah. "Can't ye do that?"

"I'll try," responded the sturdy lass.

Jairus held the warrior's feet while the girl slipped the rope under them. She readily made the slip-noose, and then drew it as tight as her strength would permit.

"Now cut that rope and do the same thing with his hands," said Jeremiah. "I'll hold 'em so he can't hurt ye. There, don't be in a hurry about it! Take yer time and be careful," he added, as he saw the girl's face become pale as she stood where

she could look down into the blazing eyes of the helpless warrior.

For a moment the savage Panther again tried to free himself. He twisted, and squirmed, and struggled, exerting a strength that seemed to be almost supernatural, and both Jairus and Jeremiah for a time thought that he would succeed in getting away in spite of their efforts; but the advantage was with them, and at last the girl succeeded in placing the rope under his arms, and again making a noose, drew it tight with all her strength. At Jeremiah's direction she had left a yard or so of the rope beyond the knot when she cut it, and the reason for doing so at once became apparent.

"Now, Jairus," said Jeremiah, without looking behind him as he spoke, "when I count three we'll both jump off from him together, and I'll grab this rope and you take the one by his feet. We'll pull him up against the legs of this 'ere table. You pull his feet around towards you and I'll yank his hands towards me, and if we pull hard enough, we'll have him sure and fast. Be ye ready?"

"Yes," replied Jairus, looking carefully at the rope which the girl had placed close by his hands.

"You'd better go outside," said Jeremiah to the girl, who went as far as the doorway, and then stopped and waited to see the issue of the struggle; for the girls as well as the boys of the frontier were of necessity made of sturdy stuff.

"Now, then, Jairus," continued Jeremiah, "get ready and do yer best! One, two, THREE!"

In an instant the two men leaped from the prostrate body, and, grasping the ropes, pulled them quickly around the legs of the table, which was standing near.

The Panther struggled desperately, but all his struggle was in vain, and his captors soon had him bound fast in a position from which he could not move himself.

"Now, then, ye varmint, I'll give ye a dose of yer own medicine!" said Jeremiah, as he wrenched the knife and tomahawk from the hands of the Panther. "I'll show ye just how good it feels to have a war-dance goin' on in front of ye. Me big Injun! Me no scalp um white squaw," he continued, imitating the cries and movements which the Panther had used a few moments before. "I'll show ye what I can do with a knife, too!" and he advanced and stood over the prostrate Indian as he spoke. The Panther, however, made no response, though his dark eyes blazed like burning coals.

"Oh, hold on, Jeremiah!" said Jairus quickly. "Don't touch him now. Let's think of what's best to be done."

As he spoke, Jairus glanced about him for the girl who had given them such substantial aid, but she had disappeared. "Don't you use the knife on him. 'Twas bad enough for him. We don't want to use any such tricks."

"No, you don't; that's a fact," said Alec Bryan, who just then entered the room and gazed in astonishment about him. "What have you been up to, anyway? What's all this rumpus about, I'd like to know."

Jeremiah briefly related the story of their encounter, and as he finished, Bryan said: "I know this fellow. He's 'The Panther,' as they call him. They're telling great stories about him, too, just now. But you don't want to knife him — not but what he deserves it, but that isn't the thing to do with him now."

"What shall we do, then? He's too dangerous a varmint to be allowed to run around loose."

"So he is," replied Bryan, "but we'll take him out to my smoke-house and leave him there for the night."

"Jest as you say," said Jeremiah, "though I'm of the opinion 'twould be better to have a little smoke there, too."

Bryan laughed, but made no reply as he looked carefully to the cords with which the Indian was bound. Apparently not satisfied by his examination, he procured some more rope and proceeded to bind the prisoner more securely. Then, at the scout's word, the three men freed him from the table, and lifting him in their arms carried him out to the smoke-house, and leaving him within, carefully fastened the door and went back to the public room.

Jairus and Jeremiah showed plainly the effects of the fearful struggle through which they had passed, but when they seated themselves it was with a feeling of intense relief, for only a few moments before neither had hoped to escape as they had.

"When you goin' to start for Phil Schuyler's army?" inquired Alec Bryan abruptly.

"Right away. The sooner we get out of this, the better," said Jeremiah.

"No, you ain't goin' right away," replied the scout.

"We're not? Why not, I'd like to know?"

"Because you'll have to wait till mornin', now. Mebbe you remember the girl what happened in and gave you the rope?" he inquired.

"Yes."

"Well, I want her to go with you, and so you'll have to wait till mornin'. There's a bit of a story I've got to tell you, too; so you see you'll jest have to wait, and that's all there is about it."

His hearers looked at him in surprise, and Alec at once began his story.

CHAPTER XXV.

A NEW COMPANION.

"You see," began Alec Bryan, "the story as it comes to me is somewhat like this. There was a girl named Jenny M'Crea visitin' down here below Fort Edward at Mrs. M'Neil's. Mrs. M'Neil, you know, was a cousin of General Fraser, and I suppose they thought they'd be all safe there on that account. Well, it seems there was a young Tory lieutenant among the redcoats, named David Jones."

Jairus began to listen more intently as he heard the lieutenant's name mentioned, for there were special reasons for his recollection of him; but he said nothing, and the scout went on with his story without perceiving the lad's increased interest. "Well, Lieutenant David sent for Jenny, to whom he was engaged to be married, to come to the British camp. Some say he sent for her to come so that they could be married by Chaplain Brudenell, for a good many of the officers, and men too, for that matter, have their wives along with them; but I understand Jones denies sending the letter. He

promised the Panther, and the Indians who went with him to conduct Jenny to the British camp, a barrel of rum if they succeeded.

"The stories don't agree very well from this point on, some sayin' as how, after Jenny and Mrs. M'Neil started, that they were attacked by a party of Americans, and that poor Jenny was shot; but others say when the Indians stopped on the way by a spring, they got to quarrellin' among themselves about who should have charge of that barrel of rum they were to have, and that at last they got so warm about it that one of the savages up with his tomahawk and crushed in the skull of the poor girl.

"Well, Mrs. M'Neil got into the camp, and pretty soon she saw one of the redskins waving a scalp he had taken, and she knew at once it was Jenny's; for her hair was all black and glossy and as shiny as silk. I suspect there was a great time then, and I understand Burgoyne had the Panther up before him and threatened to hang him for the deed, but the redskin couldn't be proven guilty, and so got off. I think he must have got some of the barrel o' rum, though, from the stories I hear about him."

"I don't think there's very much doubt about that," said Jeremiah ruefully, for he still bore many of the marks of his recent encounter. "I've been close enough to get a whiff of his breath myself."

"So I fancy," replied Alec dryly. "But you're safe now, and so is the Panther. It's a fearful story, though, this about Jenny M'Crea, and unless I'm

greatly mistaken, it will help to fill out Schuyler's regiments more than all the other things put together. You see, the settlers won't stop to think very much, and they're afraid the next ones to suffer will be their own wives and daughters, and they blame Johnnie Burgoyne for it all. Perhaps they're right too, for all I know. He had no right to use the redskins anyway, and it's bound to hurt him most of all in the long run."

Jairus still was silent. He was thinking of Lieutenant Jones, whom he thoroughly liked, and was wondering how he was bearing his sorrow. His thoughts were recalled in a moment, however, by the question which Jeremiah asked.

"But what about this other girl, the one you say we've got to take with us? It's a pretty big contract, I'm thinkin', to take a young girl with us through a country such as this is now."

"Yes, I know it," replied Bryan, "but that's the very reason why she's got to go with you. It isn't just safe for her to go, but it's a good deal more unsafe for her to stay here. The Tories and Indians are thick as flies around a milk-pail. She just can't stay here, and that's all there is about it. Her name's Prudence, — Prudence Thorpe, — and she's a kind of a friend of Mrs. Schuyler's. Leastwise, Mrs. Schuyler'll look after her, and you two men will have to see that she's placed in her care. She's a brave lass, and will give you little trouble, and if you should happen to have a brush with the Tories or

Indians, she'll take her part, most as well as this lad here," and he pointed at Jairus as he spoke.

"That may all be so," replied Jeremiah, "but I don't see how she's going to stand the tramp. It's a good long ways to Fort Edward, and we're not going to crawl over the ground, let me tell ye, either."

"You won't have to; I've got three horses for you. When you get into the camp, you just turn 'em over to Phil Schuyler. I'm thinkin' he may be able to find some use for 'em."

"Horses? That alters the case entirely. I think we may be able to take her, after all."

"Of course you'll take her. But you're not goin' to have any easy time, let me tell you. There'll be plenty of men to pick you off if you don't look out. Still, I'm goin' to give you a tip or two before you start, and I'm thinkin' I may be able to slide you through."

"How in the world do you manage to keep so well posted, Alec?" said Jeremiah admiringly.

"You don't expect me to give you all my secrets, do you? Still I don't mind tellin' you that I am pretty well posted, fairly well that is, if I do say as ought not. Now, just to show you that I know what I'm talkin' about you listen while I run over on my fingers what Johnnie Burgoyne's been a doin'."

Alec Bryan spread out the fingers of one hand, and with the other began to count off the movements of the British commander. "On the 6th of

May Johnnie arrives at Quebec; on the 10th he receives the command of the army from General Carleton, a man who in my opinion forgot more in one minute than Johnnie could learn in one year, which same is neither here nor there. This was at Quebec, too, you understand. On the 12th he arrives at Montreal, and pretty soon off he starts with all his men. On the 7th of June he leaves Three Rivers; from the 10th to the 14th he's at Fort Chambly; on the 15th he's at Isle au Noix; from the 17th to the 20th he's at Cumberland Head. Then from the 21st to the 28th he's at the river Bouquet, and on the 29th and 30th he's at Crown Point. On the 1st day of July he's at Ticonderoga; from the 7th to the 23d at Skenesborough and then at Fort Anne, and my impression is that now he's in Fort Edward. There, doesn't that look as if I'd followed Johnnie pretty fairly well?" added the scout with evident pride.

"It does that!" said Jeremiah with enthusiasm. "But I don't understand about Burgoyne being in Fort Edward. Have you heard anything? Has he driven Schuyler out? What do you mean?"

"No, he hasn't driven Schuyler out, but Schuyler may have gone out of his own accord. I happen to know that such a thing is pretty likely to happen."

"And that means that the Americans are being driven right on towards Albany and will be caught between the two armies, and smashed like a fly between my two hands," said Jeremiah gloomily.

"It doesn't mean anything of the kind. Phil Schuyler's all right, and he knows just what he's doin', every time. You'll know more about that later on, I'm thinkin'. Now we'll have some supper, and after your fracas you'll be tired enough to get in bed early; for you'll want to start in the mornin' before sunrise, I'm thinkin'!"

Supper was now ready, and as they sat down to the table, Jairus found that he was seated next to Prudence Thorpe. He felt somewhat embarrassed, at first; for the recollection of the first sight she had had of him, when he was struggling desperately to hold the feet and legs of the Panther, was fresh in his mind.

He was soon at his ease, however; for Prudence praised him for his bravery, and soon drew forth the story of his adventures since John Burgoyne had appeared on Lake Champlain.

"And your name's Jairus Goodwin, is it?" she said when they had left the supper table and were standing by one of the windows in the family sitting-room.

"Yes," replied Jairus. "Why do you ask? That's the second time you've done it. Don't you think it's a good name?"

"Oh, it will do. It will have to, I suppose, for such a young soldier as you," laughed Prudence. "Only I was thinking. It's not the first time I've heard it, if you must know."

But to all of the lad's questions, as to where or

how she had heard the name before, she would give no reply.

Still, when Jairus was summoned by Jeremiah to go to bed, he thought he had spent a very pleasant evening, and as he turned to leave the room he said: "Then you are to go with us, are you, in the morning? Well, I'm very glad of it, for my part."

"Are you?" said Prudence demurely. "Well, I don't know whether I am or not; but as Alec Bryan has promised to see that I am soon safely with Mistress Catherine Schuyler, I fancy I shall have to put up with such protection as I can find. If Alec Bryan is content to trust me with you, I don't suppose a protest would do any good, even if I offered one. I only hope there won't be any Indian to kick at you on the way. At any rate, I think we'd better take some rope along with us."

Jairus colored deeply, not being in the least familiar with the ways of girls, and thinking that she was making fun of the appearance he presented when first she had seen him. However, he managed to say "good night," and at once followed Jeremiah, who was holding a candle in his hands, to the room in the low and unfinished loft.

"I've been out to see the Panther," said Jeremiah as they prepared for bed. "His eyes burned like coals, but he didn't say anything when I opened the door and looked in at him. 'Twas a great feat, that, my lad, when we took and tied him up. 'Twas a great feat, indeed."

"I thought Prudence was the one who tied him," responded Jairus, who was still thinking of the light way in which he thought the girl regarded him. "It seems to me for two men, to say nothing of the help of a girl, to be able to tie up one Indian, was not such a wonderful thing to do, Jeremiah."

"What's gone wrong with ye, my lad?" said Jeremiah quickly. "Has that little wench, Prudence, been turning yer head in this short time? Ah, my lad, my lad," added the soldier, shaking his head, "ye're a silly boy to let one little lass steal yer wits away like this. But then ye're not so different from the rest of us, I suppose, after all. And yet 'twas a wonderful thing to do! Why, when I lifted that chair and it struck against the beams, I thought it was all up with us, I did indeed. Ye see, the Panther was armed with a knife and tomahawk, and I suppose he's the most powerful brute in Burgoyne's army. He's a giant, he is, and I want to put yer mind at rest. Don't you believe it was a little thing we did. Don't ye let that little wench —"

Jeremiah suddenly stopped and glanced keenly at Jairus, who was already in bed, and apparently asleep. "Humph," he muttered as he blew out the candle and took his place beside his companion, but just what he meant by the expression he did not explain, and Jairus, who was only feigning sleep, could not understand.

It was not yet sunrise when Alec Bryan summoned the two men, and when they entered the

public room they could see their horses in the dooryard, bridled and waiting for them.

"The bird's flown!" said Alec abruptly.

"'The bird's flown!'" repeated Jeremiah. "I don't know as I just catch yer meaning, Alec Bryan."

"Oh, nothing, only the Panther's got away. Slipped his cords and started out in the night. How he did it, I can't tell; but he's gone; that's all there is about it. You can see for yourself if you want to."

There was a suspicion in Jairus's mind that Alec could have told more if he had wished to, but he did not speak, and at once followed the men into the room in which breakfast was waiting for them.

Prudence was waiting, too, and her manner was so different from that of the preceding evening that Jairus at once felt relieved and blamed himself for suspecting that she had made light of his valor.

"I suppose," said Jeremiah, "that the fact of the Panther's getting out won't make our journey any more pleasant than it would have been. Probably he's got friends about, and we may hear from him again."

"The fact is," said Alec, "that there are a good many Tories and Indians prowlin' round. I can't deny that. I don't know, Prudy, my lass, but that I'd better keep you here. The danger's most too great for you to start out. How do you feel about it, yourself?"

"I want to go," said Prudence quietly. "I'm not afraid with these two men. Didn't I see them tie up the Panther yesterday? Besides, Mistress Schuyler is waiting for me, and I must go."

Jairus flushed, for he was unable to tell from the girl's manner whether she was speaking lightly or not. Her tones were serious enough, but there was a sparkle in her eyes that seemed to belie her words.

"Very well, have it your own way," replied Alec. "I have known Jeremiah for years, and I'm sure he'll do his best for you; and I think this young man will, too," he added, glancing kindly at Jairus.

"Oh, he'll do the best he can," responded Prudence mischievously. "He'll do to hold the Panther's feet, if he comes around again, while Jeremiah and I tie up his hands. Oh, I'm not afraid."

Alec laughed at the words, but as Jeremiah plainly showed his displeasure, Prudence quickly added: "Seriously, I am afraid to go, but I'm afraid to stay, too. I'm sure these men are both brave, and that I shall be safe with them. At any rate, I'm going to start with them and take the chance."

"There is a good deal of danger," said Alec seriously, "but I shan't oppose you. Now, Jeremiah," he added, turning to the soldier, "remember the place I was telling you about. The folks there are straight, and you can trust 'em every bit. You'd better not go beyond there to-day, and put up with 'em till mornin'."

Jeremiah promised to follow the directions, and

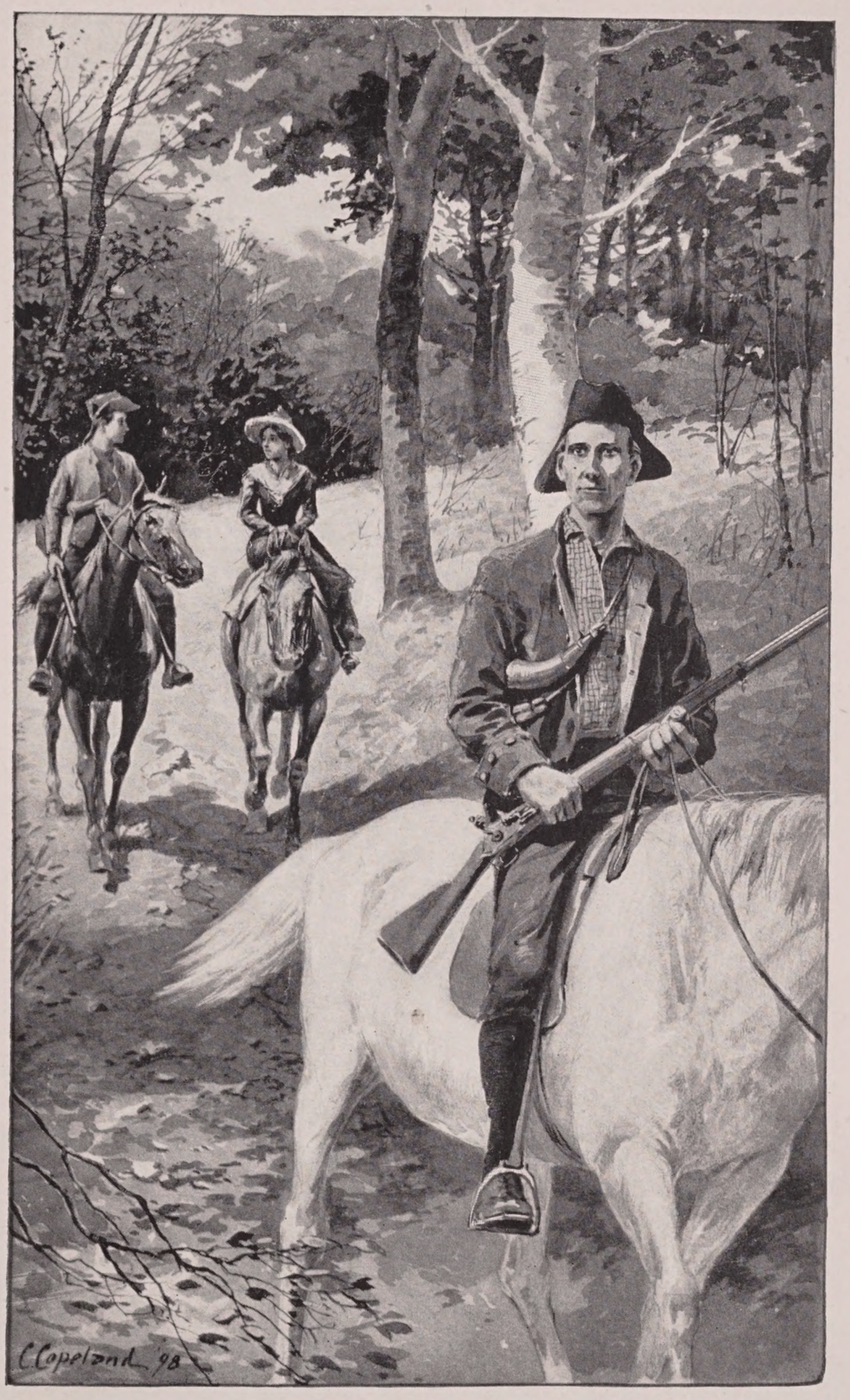
in a few moments the good bys were spoken, and the little party of three started forth on their perilous journey.

For a long time no one of them spoke. The knowledge of the presence of Tories and Indians kept them alert, and the final warnings of Bryan were not soon, nor easily, forgotten. All three were well mounted, and Jairus marked with pleasure the ease and confidence with which Prudence handled the horse she was riding.

The rough roadway led through long stretches of the forest, and every tree they passed might be the hiding-place of some enemy. They were watchful, and as the hours passed and no danger thus far had been discovered, their spirits rose somewhat, and it somehow came to pass that Jairus found himself riding by the side of Prudence, while Jeremiah rode in advance and kept a careful lookout.

What the subject of the conversation between the two was is not known, but that it was not unpleasant could be readily seen by the change which had come over Jairus. His annoyance had entirely disappeared, and he seemed to be enjoying himself thoroughly.

It was only the middle of the afternoon when Jeremiah reined in his horse, and pointing to a rude house by the roadside said: "This is the place where Alec told us to stop. It seems to me too early, but I guess he knew what he was talking about, so we'll do as he told us to. Come on!"



JAIRUS FOUND HIMSELF RIDING BY THE SIDE OF PRUDENCE.

The three then turned in from the road and approached the house. As they stopped, Jairus could hardly trust his eyes when he saw standing in the doorway his own cousin, Arthur Goodwin.

His confusion was increased a moment later when his companion exclaimed: "Why, Arthur Goodwin, what are you doing here?"

Arthur looked up quickly at the hail, and while he evidently was pleased, he did not offer to advance. Somehow, Jairus found his dislike of his cousin suddenly greatly increased, but he forgot it all, when a moment later he obtained a glimpse of a number of men in the house. His fear grew when he discovered that at least two or three of them were clad in the British uniform, and he also recognized others as having been among the Tories whose supplies in the ravine he had aided in destroying.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SAMUEL GOES ON TIMOTHY'S EXPEDITION.

SAMUEL GOODWIN had now settled into the routine of the camp life in the American army, which lay stretched along the western bank of the Hudson from Stillwater to Half Moon, while Burgoyne's forces were about thirty miles higher up, on the eastern bank extending from Fort Edward to the Batten Kill. The results of the engagements we already have described had greatly increased the spirit of the Americans, and there were even hopes expressed of being able to check the advance of John Burgoyne.

There was, however, a constant feeling of uncertainty manifest, and the lack of knowledge of what Clinton and Howe were doing increased the uneasiness of the men. Samuel's life was like that of many of the soldiers, decidedly unconventional, for strict military discipline was almost unknown. He was staying most of the time on the outskirts of the army; for the place of danger and responsibility was largely given over to the troops which already had had a taste of war. Still, Samuel was free to

come and go within the lines much as he chose, and many were the hours he spent with Timothy Murphy, who was acknowledged to be the best shot among Daniel Morgan's dragoons, which was saying a good deal for him; for the entire band had gained a great reputation with their rifles.

The words "Liberty or Death" which he had seen inscribed upon the fur-trimmed hunting-shirt of Timothy, when he had first looked down upon him from his hiding-place in the tree near the sheep-pen, he soon found was not peculiar to the honest Irishman's garb, but was shared by all the band, and seemed to attract as much attention and admiration from the Continentals as it had from Samuel. As for the leader, Daniel Morgan, the "Jarseyman who had gone to Varginia," as Timothy expressed it, Samuel entertained the most unbounded admiration for him. His powerful body and bold manners were such as to arouse the wonder of a young lad like Samuel; and indeed throughout the army, the prejudice which had been manifested against the band, composed largely as it was of Irishmen, when they had first joined the eastern forces, had largely disappeared by this time, and the true worth of the men was recognized and respected by nearly all.

An event had occurred, however, in the American camp that promised little good. Philip Schuyler had been superseded in the command of the forces by General Gates. Congress had at last yielded to the demands of Schuyler's enemies, and believing

that the feeling on the part of the soldiers, especially of the New England men, was too strong against Schuyler to permit of a successful issue of the campaign, they had given the command to General Gates, a weak and incompetent man in almost every way.

Time has vindicated the merits of Philip Schuyler, but the change was a sad mistake at the time, and the success which later crowned the American cause was entirely in spite of Gates, not because of anything he did. However, there were many in the camp who hailed his coming with delight, and boasted, that now something worth while would be done.

The pettiness of General Gates can readily be seen, when it is remembered that he at once contemptuously ignored Schuyler, and did not even invite him to the council of the officers which he speedily called.

He also ignored Arnold, and had it not been for the unbounded faith of the men in Arnold's bravery and ability, it might have fared ill with General Gates and the American army. As it was, he reaped the harvest others sowed, and gained the plaudits others deserved.

His disposition and actions never appeared more petty than in comparison with Philip Schuyler's actions at the time. Without a murmur or complaint, Schuyler did all that lay within his power for his successor, and then in quiet dignity withdrew.

"Thot Gates is nuthin' more nor less than a little

dandy, sorr," said Timothy Murphy to Samuel one day when he had sought out the lad. "Mark me words, me lad, we'll all of us see the day, and that soon, whin we'll pine for a sight of Phil Schuyler's face, as Oi'm after doin' for a squint of me ould mother's face, who's away off in ould Oireland, bless the sowls of the two of thim!"

"You're not going to leave the army, are you, Tim?" said Samuel quickly.

"Niver a bit. Oi'm after stayin' all the more now. They'll need Dan'l Morgan's men more nor iver now, Oi'm thinkin', and Timothy Murphy's not the one to be lavin' when the fracas has just begun. Indade, Oi've cum for yez, me lad, jist now, to take a hand in a bit of a rumpus. Will yez come wid me?"

"Where? What are you after now, Timothy?"

"That's jist like the Yankee lad that ye are," laughed Timothy, "to be after answerin' me question by axin' two more in the place of it. But I don't mind a bit tellin' yez."

And Timothy explained at once the project in his mind.

It seems, that the region adjoining that in which the army lay was in exceeding peril from bands of prowling Indians and marauding Tories. Many of the latter had come down from Canada and were striving to capture unsuspecting settlers who had not joined the army, and carry them off to Canada and thereby claim the reward which Burgoyne had offered for every prisoner taken.

At a place only a few miles beyond the lines of the army, a Whig, by chance, had thought he had discovered that a few Tories were concealed somewhere in the vicinity, and he had hurried the few families there into the rude blockhouse, which every little settlement had for its defence, and had then set off for the American camp.

He had not learned the hiding-place of the suspected Tories, and indeed was not positive that any were in the vicinity; but the presence and question of a strange lad, "as to where he might be able to obtain a bottle of rum," had at once aroused the suspicions of the ardent Whig. He had followed the lad as he left the settlement, and while he had seen enough to warrant him in the belief that a small band of Tories was in the vicinity, he had not considered it safe to carry his investigations too far, and, indeed, the lad had at last doubled on his tracks and thrown off his pursuer.

The Whig had then come to the camp, and as a result, Timothy and three companions were to go to search the neighborhood. As a special favor, the Irishman had obtained permission for Samuel to go with him; for enjoying, as he did, anything in the nature of a contest, he thought that the lad, for whom he had conceived a strong liking, would also be glad to go. The project was dangerous, but of that Timothy never thought, and when Samuel accepted the somewhat doubtful invitation, the rifleman was as happy as a boy.

The party of five soon left the camp, and in the course of a few hours arrived at the little settlement.

The Whig had come with them, and as they drew near his home, he said, "I followed the lad down to the big clump of bushes over there," and he pointed, as he spoke, to a large extent of swampy ground, covered with a heavy growth of bushes and extending over many acres.

"They may be gone now, sorr," said Timothy.

"No, they're not gone," replied the man; "for if any one had been seen to leave the place, then a white cloth would have been hung out of the windows of my house, and you can see there's no sign of that," he added, pointing towards the log house in the distance.

The soldiers held a brief consultation, and it was soon decided that the best plan would be for the Whig to return to his house and leave the men to make their own investigations.

The man at once departed, and as soon as he was gone, Timothy, who was the acknowledged leader, at once began to arrange his plans. He divided his force into two divisions, one consisting of himself, Samuel, and another soldier, while the other two men were to act separately.

The two divisions were to start in opposite directions from the same spot and proceed around the nearly circular swamp until they met, when they would compare experiences, and if nothing had been discovered by either, they would repeat the operation, going a little farther within the swamp.

By continuing this plan, they would gradually draw near the centre of the bushes, and the entire field would be covered. Signals were agreed upon in case of the need of help, and then, at a word from Timothy, the men separated and began their search.

Samuel felt as if he were running a fox to cover, only in the present case the game was far more difficult to bag. Besides, there was the constant element of danger added. No one knew the exact number of the men within, nor indeed that men were there. But the probability was so strong that all the party were eager for the search to be made.

Marshy places abounded, into which the feet of the men sank. Trees grew in scattered places, and among their high branches enemies might be concealed, and all they would have to do would be to shoot down upon the approaching men, without being discovered themselves.

As the search went on, Samuel found that his alarm was increasing. A glance at his two companions showed that they were sharing in the increasing excitement. They approached cautiously the clumps of bushes, eagerly examining the ground for signs of a path. They peered carefully up into the trees as they drew near them, but the outer circuit was completed, and no signs of the Tories had been discovered.

Again they began the search, entering farther within the swamp. The passage was more difficult now, and although the distance was not so

great, more time was consumed in completing the circuit. The men were showing signs of fatigue, as well as of fear and anxiety, when at last they came together and reported that none had discovered any hiding-place.

The sun was low now, and darkness would soon be at hand. The peril would then be greatly increased; for if a lurking enemy should discover them, every advantage would be on his side, and the searching party would not be able even to make a stand in the darkness.

It was finally decided to penetrate a little farther, and make the circuit once more; and then, in case of failure to discover any signs of the Tories, to decide upon their future course of action.

The dusk had settled into the gloom when at last the men came together again and still reported their failure. They were worn by their exertions, bespattered with mud, and were almost hopeless of succeeding now.

A whispered consultation then took place, the result of which was that they decided to remain where they were for the night, and resume their search in the early morning light. Two of the men were for abandoning it then and there, claiming that it all was as hopeless as it was useless; but Timothy's insistence at last prevailed, and the men again separated, one division to pass the night on one side of the swamp, and the other on the farther side.

Dry places were readily found, and when Samuel at last threw himself upon the ground, he was so tired that in spite of his anxiety he was soon asleep. For a few moments he had thought of his mother and brother, and the far-away home in the clearing. What a change had come within a few weeks, and how different it all was from the peaceful life of a few months back! Then, their worst enemies had been the wolves and panthers of the forest, but now the wild beasts seemed merciful in contrast with the horrors of war. His home was burned, his mother had disappeared and perhaps had been slain, while the whereabouts of his brother Jairus formed another almost inscrutable mystery. As the lad looked up at the stars, which he could see twinkling in the sky overhead, his thoughts were hard and bitter. The peril of his own situation was almost forgotten in his anxiety for his mother and brother, but he was far too weary even to retain such thoughts long, and was soon asleep.

He was awakened by Timothy, who had remained on guard all through the night. It was not yet fairly light, and, as Samuel sat upright, at first he could hardly realize where he was. As soon as he heard Timothy's voice, however, it all came back.

"We'll be after startin' at once, me boy; for we want to get out of this, and have some breakfast. Now if you're awake, we'll begin."

In a moment Samuel was ready, and the search was resumed. They had not advanced many rods,

however, before the lad's attention was directed towards three logs, so arranged as to block the progress of any one who should try to enter what certainly looked like a path.

Touching Timothy upon the shoulder, for the Irishman was near him at the time, Samuel silently pointed at his discovery. Timothy's eyes glistened at the sight, and nodding his head, indicated that Samuel should approach and see what lay beyond.

Accordingly, the lad slowly and cautiously entered the path, and approaching the upright logs climbed upon them. He almost lost his balance and fell backward at the sight which met his eyes.

Seated in a semicircle upon the ground before him were five rough-appearing men, who were watching their two companions as they prepared to start a fire by which to cook their breakfast. A hasty glance showed the startled lad that the men were dressing. Their clothing was much worn, but still betrayed the British uniform. Their caps were drawn upon their heads, as the regulars wore them, and within easy grasp of each man lay his gun.

Samuel took all this in at a glance; and then, almost too frightened to realize what he was doing, slowly drew back without being discovered. His pale face at once revealed to Timothy that something of a startling nature had been discovered, and in a moment the two men were by the side of the lad, listening to the few words of explanation he whispered to them.

"Sivin, is it?" whispered Timothy. "Thin, be jabbers, me name's not Timothy Murphy, if we don't take thim, ivery one of thim."

His companions looked at him in consternation. Surely, he would not attempt to take seven desperate men with only three. Surely, he would at least wait for their two companions to join them. Indeed, to Samuel, the only safe course seemed to be to withdraw quietly, and at once.

"Now yez do jist as Oi'm after tellin' yez," whispered Timothy, looking carefully to the priming of his gun. "Come on now, and the whole of yez do jist as Oi'm after doin' meself."

With trembling hearts, and hands that trembled far more than their hearts, Timothy's two companions followed his example, looked carefully to their priming, and then slowly and cautiously approached the logs.

Timothy's quick eyes at once saw that there was standing-room on each side, and motioning to his companions for one to take his stand on one side, and the other on the other, prepared to mount the logs himself.

In a moment this had been accomplished, and the three men stood in plain sight of the little camp. They drew their guns to their shoulders as Timothy directed, and then, satisfied that as yet their presence had not been discovered, the bold Irishman, in a voice which might have been heard a quarter of a mile away, called upon the band to surrender.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE "IRISHMAN'S GUN."

THE five men in the group were as motionless as if they had been turned into stone. They looked at the guns which were pointed towards them, and as if fascinated by the sight, not one turned away his eyes.

The astonishment which was manifest when the startling summons to surrender had been given, soon gave place to a look of consternation and alarm. No one spoke, and Samuel could not determine who were the more badly frightened — the Tories or himself. Timothy Murphy and his other companion seemed to be as cool and unconcerned as if summoning a party of Tories twice as large as their own company, was a matter of every-day occurrence.

The leader of the Tory band was the first to recover his senses, and, without turning his eyes away from Timothy, he slowly stretched forth his hand to grasp his gun, which was on the ground near him. Something which he saw in the Irishman's eyes caused him to desist, but, unable to re-

strain himself, again he reached forth to take his gun.

"None o' that, me lad!" said Timothy. "Ye'll be a dead mon when ye hold that gun agin," he added, with a true Irishman's tendency to make a bull. "Now thin,, come out o' that! Come over these logs one at a time, and we'll make no trouble for yez; but as sure's me name's Timothy Murphy, the first one to reach for a gun, or who disobeys me orders, will get a dose o' me lead. Now thin, step lively, me lads! One at a time, as Oi'm tellin' yez. You'll be after bein' the furst one," he added, nodding his head at the Tory nearest him.

There was no hesitation now. They thought they were surrounded by enemies, and their only hope lay in prompt obedience. Accordingly, the man whom Timothy had indicated, after giving one hasty glance about him, clambered over the logs.

Timothy and Samuel kept their guns still aimed at the band, but their companion, who was a powerful man, quickly bound the prisoner's hands behind him with light thongs of deer's hide which he had brought with him.

One after another the men obeyed the summons and were bound, the leader coming last of all.

"Now thin, before we return, we'll be after havin' a look at the camp o' the traitors," said Timothy, entering quickly within the enclosure.

The stout-hearted leader was seen to return as hastily as he had entered, and with a look of alarm

upon his face which startled his companions. "Women, be jabbers! Female women!" shouted the excited man as if he were pursued by enemies.

Pursuit there was, but it was by the weeping, terror-stricken women, who followed Timothy, and with many tears and sobs began to beseech the captors to spare the lives of their prisoners. It soon appeared that they were the sisters of the unfortunate men, and well aware of the terrible vengeance which had been inflicted upon Tories and spies since the death of Jane M'Crea, they were fearful that their brothers might then and there suffer the penalty of their crimes.

"Oh, spare them, spare them!" cried one of the women, breaking into a flood of tears. "They haven't done any harm. They're not spies. You took them when they were armed, and so they can't be spies, anyway. Oh, spare them, spare them! Think of your own mothers and sisters! Think how they would feel if they were standing where we are! Oh, spare them! We beg of you to spare them!" and in the agony of her grief the youngest of the women threw herself upon the ground, and tried to clasp Timothy's knees.

Timothy was not unmoved by the sight of her grief, and said not unkindly: "We're not goin' for to hang 'em now, though Oi doubt not they desarve it richly. They can't be soldiers, for if they had been they wouldn't all sivin o' 'em surrendered without ever firin' a gun, or givin' a blow. No, ma'am,

they're not soldiers, that's plain as the nose on yer face,—Oi mean yer nose on my face,—no, Oi mean me nose on your face,—no, be jabbers, beggin' yer pardon, ma'am, Oi'm after meanin' me own nose on me own face; that's it, bedad! But Oi'll give 'em a chance to tell who they are thimselves," and he glanced questioningly at the prisoners as he spoke.

"We're from Canada. We came down to kidnap some of the Whigs. We're not spies. We haven't done any harm," said the youngest of the prisoners quickly, ignoring the glances of anger and contempt bestowed upon him by his four companions in misery.

"Oi'm jist sure o' that, me boy," replied Timothy. "Ye haven't done any harm yit, and Oi don't think ye iver will. But Oi'm a bit puzzled to know what to do with these women. Oi wasn't after thinkin' Oi'd bag that kind o' game. Oi'm ready to belave that these traitors were after tryin' to kidnap some o' our good men, for Oi'm hearin' o' such deeds every day now. We'll let these chaps tell their own story to them as knows better nor Oi what to do wid 'em. But what about these women?"

"Oh, leave us here! we can go home ourselves! If you'll only save our brothers, we won't ask anything for ourselves. Oh, spare them! Don't hang them! We know our way out of the swamp, and will go right back where we came from this morning. Only spare our brothers; that's all we ask!"

"Be jabbers, thin, we'll have to lave the ladies and

go back to camp with the game we've got. Now thin, form in loine, there! Be after startin', right smart! Good day to yez, ladies," he added, turning and bowing low to the sisters of the unfortunate men.

In a brief time the little party left the swamp, and the five prisoners, crestfallen and chagrined to have been captured in such a manner, went with them, each with his hands bound behind his back. All save the young man who had revealed the purpose of their work still kept up a bold appearance, declaring that they were not spies, and could be treated only as prisoners of war.

Timothy, as well as the men, were well aware of the state of the feeling in the region. Tories and Whigs alike were daily becoming more excited, and the feeling was manifesting itself in a manner not highly creditable to either side. Houses of the suspected men were burned, their property confiscated, and their lives, in many instances, taken without the formality of a trial. The horrors of war were abroad in the region, and neighbor had turned against neighbor, and friend against friend.

Not much was said on the return march. Timothy called a halt, and secured breakfast for them all, and then the march was quickly resumed. Rescuing parties might be abroad in the land, and the men upon whom they could depend were not numerous.

It was near night when they entered within the American lines, and the five prisoners were placed for safety in a room together.

When Samuel Goodwin wrapped himself in his blanket that night, it was long before sleep came to him. The exciting events of the march and the capture kept running through his mind, and he was again thinking of his mother and Jairus. Where could they be? Not a word had been heard from either, and the troubled lad thought long and hard over the problem. But no solution had been found when at last his eyelids became heavy, and he slept.

The following morning, when he returned to the house in which the prisoners had been confined, he witnessed a strange sight. A number of the Continental soldiers had assembled before the place, and it was at once evident to Samuel that something unusual had occurred. He soon discovered Timothy in the assembly, and to him the troubled lad went.

"What is it, Timothy? What's the meaning of this crowd? Have the prisoners escaped?"

"Indade, and that they have not. There's more o' 'em than there was last night."

"More of them? I don't understand you. What do you mean?"

"Jist what Oi'm tellin' yez. There was sivin last night, wasn't there? Well, now there's tin. That's more'n sivin, isn't it? Well, thin, there's more'n there was last night, as Oi'm after sayin'."

"But I don't understand. How came there to be more? Who are they? Where did they come

from? What are they? How did they come? Why were they put in with the others?"

"Jist hear the lad, will yez?" said Timothy with a laugh. "Did any one iver see the loikes o' him? He can ask more questions than all the sisters o' them Tories we brought into camp last night. His tongue runs loike a mill-tail, that it does."

"But I wish you'd tell me, Timothy," persisted Samuel, somewhat abashed by the Irishman's good-natured laugh. "I don't understand why there's such a crowd here. There must be thirty of our men, and they're acting as if they were excited, too, about something. And how came there to be more prisoners in the morning than there were in the evening when we left them?"

"Nothin's more easy than that," replied Timothy. "It's jist that another batch o' our men brought another parcel of these thievin' Canadian Tories, who were prowlin' round tryin' to kidnap some o' our folks. Oi understand they even had designs on Phil Schuyler himself."

"But I don't understand yet. What's the excitement here? What are our men so excited about? There must be thirty, at least, here now."

"The plain fact o' the case is," replied Timothy, "that the prisoners were all shut up together in the one room. There's no harm in that, as I knows, but ye see they're not alone in there."

"Not alone? Who's with them?"

"Powder."

"Powder? Do you mean they're armed? We took the guns away from our prisoners, I know."

"So we did. It's not the guns, me lad, it's jist the powder, as Oi'm after tellin' ye. Some chuckle-headed idiots had gone and stored the powder in the very room where we put our prisoners, bad 'cess to 'em. That's the mischief o' it. We can handle the prisoners, but not the powder."

"But they haven't any guns. The powder won't do them any good without them, will it?"

"It may do them some harm, and it may harm us too, be jabbers! The traitors have gone and laid a train right up to the door o' the room, and they're shoutin' that they'll fire it, and blow them, and the buildin', and us, all to flinders, if we try to open the door. Ye see, they've gone and barricaded the door with a beam they found inside the room, and what they're a sayin' is that rather than be taken out and hung like gintlemen and Christians, as they ought to be glad o' the honor, bad 'cess to 'em, sez Oi, why, they'll take their chances together, and all go up to the sky to onct, as it were; and then, too, they think mebbe they won't have to go alone, if so be that some of us are after tryin' to open the door. Now ye see the cause o' all this excitement, don't ye, me lad? If yez don't see it, why, thin, all Oi've got to say is, that it isn't Timothy Murphy's fault, be jabbers!"

In a moment Samuel was sharing in the excitement of the group, and as Timothy now left him,

he, too, joined the others. The men outside were calling to those within to give up peacefully, but they were met by the response, as Timothy had explained, that rather than take their chances of being hanged, they would set fire to the train of powder, and destroy themselves, and the soldiers who should dare to approach, as well.

"It isn't the traitors we're after mindin' so much," Samuel heard Timothy explain, "it's the powder we don't want to be losin', me frinds." The soldiers, however, were too highly excited to heed the Irishman's jokes, and the parley continued.

Samuel easily recognized the voice of the leader of the seven Tories he himself had assisted in capturing, and he was positive from what he had seen of him that his threat was no idle one. The door was strongly barricaded from within, and an attempt to break it down, he little doubted, would be followed by the threatened explosion.

The soldiers now withdrew for a brief consultation. There were two rooms on the first floor of the house, and above them was an unfinished chamber. This situation was discovered by the man who had been on guard during the night, and was readily perceived by them all.

The consultation was prolonged for half an hour, and no light seemed to appear upon the situation. The Tories had the advantage, and, as they were well known to be desperate men, it was no enviable task, that of approaching and attempting to batter

down the door of the room in which the prisoners were confined.

"Oi have it, me frinds," said Timothy excitedly, at last. "Give me an Irishman's gun and Oi'll soon sittle the question for yez. Indade, and 'twill make me think Oi'm back in ould Oireland once more. Oi want a good dozen of yez to stand behind me, and be ready to follow me up."

Timothy secured a strong club, the "Irishman's gun" he had mentioned, and then entered the unoccupied room of the house, and silently made his way to the empty chamber, followed by several of his companions.

It had been learned that there was a trap door in the ceiling of the room in which the prisoners were, and through this Timothy planned to drop suddenly down into the midst of his foes, and then make use of his "Irishman's gun." Samuel, in spite of his fear, was among the number of those who followed the daring man; and, as he crept on slowly and cautiously, his excitement each moment increased. Timothy alone, of all the number, appeared to be calm, but they all realized the peril of the attempt they were about to make.

Timothy now was standing by the trap door. He paused a moment and glanced back at his companions to see that they were still ready to follow.

Apparently satisfied by his inspection, he leaned low and grasped the leather strap by which the door was lifted. Then, with one strong, quick pull he

drew it back, and, with a yell, which he afterwards declared he learned from a "wild Irishman," he dropped suddenly down into the very midst of the prisoners, and began to lay about him with his club.

"Oh, ye will, will yez? Take that, thin, and that, too! And Oi'll give yez this, too, jist to remember Tim Murphy by. Come on, me boys! Come on now, will yez?"

Timothy was struggling bravely and, for a moment, held the prisoners back while he swung his heavy club and felled more than one of their number. In a moment, however, they recovered and rushed upon him, and it would have fared ill with the brave man had not his companions come to his assistance.

One after another quickly dropped through the open place, Samuel Goodwin among them, and the room was soon filled with a struggling, howling mass of humanity. Blows were delivered on every side, but the advantage was all on one side, and almost before any one realized that the struggle was ended, some one had knocked the prop from the door and the prisoners were all secured.

Samuel had grasped one of the men in the struggle, and was holding to him desperately. He quickly found that he was the stronger of the two, and soon was holding his antagonist powerless in his grasp. His surprise, however, was great when the door was flung open and he found that the prisoner he was holding was his own cousin, Arthur Goodwin.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A PARTING.

THE confusion of Jairus when he recognized his cousin, and also some of the Tories whose stores he had assisted in destroying only a few days before, soon gave way to alarm. It was true that Alec Bryan had directed him and his companions to seek shelter in this very house, but the danger was something no man could foretell, and all the plans of the scout might very easily have been overthrown by the actions of the Tories and Indians, who were now to be found in almost every part of that region.

If Jairus had been alone, doubtless he would have quickly followed his first impulse, which was to touch his horse with his spurs, and place as great a distance as possible between himself and the men whom he at once had recognized as enemies of his country. But Prudence was with him, and several motives, not all of which were recognized by the lad himself, combined to render the thought of deserting her in such a time of peril as something not to be considered even for a moment.

The girl's own actions also puzzled him. How was it that she knew his cousin? When had they

met before? And what was the meaning of the cordial greeting she had given Arthur, when first she recognized him as they approached the house?

These questions flashed through his mind in a moment, but they had not prevented him from keeping a careful watch, meanwhile, on the actions of the men before him.

"These fellows are Tories, Jeremiah," he whispered to his companion. "Something's gone wrong and Alec Bryan has made a mistake."

"Hold on a minute, Jairus," replied Jeremiah, "Alec must have known what he was talking about, and certainly this is the place where he told us to go."

"That may be so, but we don't want to run our necks right into a noose. We've got to think of Prudence, as well as of ourselves, and I think we'd better put straight out of this before any trouble comes. My cousin, Arthur Goodwin, is there, and he's seen me already. I don't believe we want any farther notice to quit. Come on, Jeremiah. Let's put out before anything happens."

The lad was whispering, but his low tones could not conceal his eagerness and excitement. Even while he was speaking he had drawn his bridle rein tight, and was about to turn his horse about, preparatory to making a dash for the road again.

"Hold on, my lad," said Jeremiah quickly. "I guess it's all right enough, for here comes somebody I know," and he looked quickly towards a man who now was advancing from the house.

As Jairus followed his companion's glance, he saw now what had been unnoticed by him before, and that was that there were other men in the company who were clad in the Continental uniform. There were several of them, and their apparent freedom at once brought hope to the young soldier's heart. Besides, so many of the men wore no uniform that it was impossible to determine to which side they belonged. In all there must be nearly fifteen men about the place.

Arthur Goodwin, while he had responded to Prudence's hail, had not offered to leave the house, and the fact that the few Continentals there carried guns, while the Tories were unarmed, served to strengthen the new hope which had come to Jairus.

He watched the young officer who now approached them and in a moment perceived that he had recognized his companion.

"Why, Jeremiah, when did you come?" the stranger asked as soon as he recognized the soldier. "We didn't know but you had been caught by the redcoats or scalped by the redskins, it's been so long since we've had a glimpse of your honest face. Come, give an account of yourself."

"My, it's Sergeant Miller!" replied Jeremiah eagerly. "You know I'm a Yankee, and I'll ask another question by the way of answering yours. Are you prisoners here, or have you taken these men?"

"I don't look nor act like a prisoner, do I?"

laughed the young sergeant. "No, sir, I'm no prisoner as yet, though no one knows what may happen before morning. I've been out on a little excursion with a few of my men, and we ran across these Tories and have given them a very cordial invitation to go back to camp with us, which I'm inclined to think they'll accept, chiefly because they can't help themselves. You see, Jeremiah," he added, lowering his voice as he spoke, "about half of these men are Canadian Tories, and we got wind of a little scheme which was in the air about their trying to kidnap General Phil Schuyler. Some of us thought that the general had had about trouble enough without these fellows being allowed to add to it, so we fixed a trap and they fell into it, every one of 'em. We've got 'em now, sure, and we'll start pretty soon with 'em for the camp. Not a bad day's work, either, I'm thinking," added the young officer, evidently proud of his success.

"Quite right, sergeant," replied Jeremiah, "quite right. But what do ye mean about General Phil Schuyler's bad luck? I hope nothing bad has happened to him or to the army. Ye see, I've been away so long I've lost all trace of things."

"Well, I should say you had," replied Sergeant Miller in surprise, "if you haven't heard of General Schuyler's bad luck. Why, he's been put out of the command, and General Gates is in his place. I call that bad luck for Schuyler, to say nothing of its being bad luck for the army. But put out your

horses and come into the house, and I'll tell you all about it. The girl needn't be afraid," he added, bowing to Prudence; "for we've two or three ladies here now, and they will look after her wants. This is Sam Powell's house, and Mistress Sam is one of the best women in this world or the next."

"What are ye waiting here for?" inquired Jeremiah as he dismounted, an example which his two companions speedily followed, Prudence alighting upon the ground before Jairus could offer her his aid. "I should think ye'd want to start straight back for the camp before yer prisoners get away."

"We'd like to start well enough," laughed the sergeant, "but, you see, we can't go before morning. I'll tell you about it when you come in," and he led the way into the house.

He conducted Prudence through the wide hall; for the house was somewhat more pretentious than the most of those on the frontier, and also contained many more rooms.

Mistress Prudence did not appear to be entirely unconscious of the interest her arrival seemed to create among the inmates, but her pretty head was not turned to either side as she passed through the hall, and was left by the sergeant in the care of Mistress Powell.

Jeremiah and Jairus were on the piazza waiting for the sergeant to return, and when he came back, as he saw that the two men were busied in their

conversation, Jairus turned to speak to his cousin, Arthur Goodwin. He had been eager to do this ever since they had arrived, but now that the moment had come, Arthur was not to be seen.

Jairus walked slowly around the house, but still could not find him. The prisoners were compelled to remain within doors, but were not confined within any one room. They had been disarmed, and as their captors outnumbered them, and were all well armed, and in addition a careful guard was maintained, no further precautions were considered as necessary for the time.

Somewhat puzzled, Jairus returned to the front of the house and was about to ask the sergeant for information, but he saw that he was still busy in his consultation with Jeremiah, and he hesitated to disturb them.

Entering the house without speaking, he passed through the hall, and as he came near to the door which opened into the kitchen, he heard a laugh which at once betrayed the presence of Arthur. He was in the kitchen.

Opening the door, he saw Mistress Powell busy in her work, and directly before him, seated side by side before the low kitchen table, were Arthur Goodwin and Prudence.

A laugh greeted his approach, and he was about to back out of the room in confusion when Prudence called: "Don't go, Jairus. Come in and hear what Arthur is telling. He's your cousin, he says. The

idea! I never thought you were Arthur's cousin," and the girl laughed heartily as she spoke, and gave an added emphasis to "Arthur," which was not in the least pleasing to Jairus.

"Yes, I'm his cousin," said Jairus, stopping near the door and looking half angrily at Prudence. "Yes, I suppose I can't deny it. I am his cousin, but I'm not proud of it."

"You're not half so much ashamed of it as I am," retorted Arthur angrily.

"Oh, don't be bad boys," pleaded Prudence. "I don't like to hear you quarrel."

"No, you prefer listening to his lies, or 'stories,' as you call them," said Jairus sharply, for he was thoroughly angry now.

"Well," replied Prudence demurely, "I don't know whether they are 'stories' or not; but if they are, they're not half so bad as it is to hear you quarrel. I'm sure I'm not to blame, and I don't see what Arthur's done to make you act so; I really don't, Jairus Goodwin."

"Arthur, will you tell me where my mother is?" said Jairus, ignoring Prudence's words. "You know where she is, I am sure. Will you tell me?"

Arthur only laughed, but made no other reply. His silence seemed to enrage Jairus still more, and he advanced threateningly towards his cousin, who had not moved from his seat at the table by the side of Prudence.

"Arthur Goodwin, will you tell me?" repeated

Jairus. "She's always been a good friend to you, you know that, and I don't know whether she's alive or not, now. Will you tell me, if you know?"

Jairus showed his deep feeling by his voice, and Prudence evidently was touched. "Tell him, Arthur, if you know," she said in a low voice.

But Arthur Goodwin still only laughed, and looking calmly at Jairus, made no reply.

"Maybe you don't know, Arthur," said Jairus, a little more calmly. "But can you tell me where Sam is? I haven't heard a word from him since I saw you. Do you know where he is? Can you tell me whether he is alive or not?"

"I don't know but I might, if I tried hard," said Arthur slowly; "but I don't think I shall."

"Why not?"

"I don't want anything to do with paupers. My father fed you, and then you and your whole family just turned against him and refused to give him what was his own. Then when he took it, for it was his all the time, what did you do? You just scattered lies about him all over the frontier. You even made some people believe them. No, sir! I could tell you something about your mother, but I won't. I could tell you a bit about Sam, and it would interest you, too, but I just won't, and that's all there is about it. I think too much of myself to have anything to do with such stuff as you are. You're no Goodwin. You're a pauper, that's just what you are. You're not fit for decent folks to

associate with, and just as soon as this little campaign is ended, I'll try to see that you get your just deserts, too!" And before Jairus perceived what was in his cousin's mind, Arthur slipped from the table and passed quickly through the open doorway into the hall, and rejoined some of his companions.

"I don't see what you want to quarrel for, Jairus," said Prudence. "You began it, I'm sure; Arthur didn't."

"No, of course he didn't," said Jairus quietly, for he was too angry to trust himself to say much. "No, of course he didn't. His mother hasn't been carried away by the Tories or Indians. His brother hasn't been taken prisoner, and maybe hanged before this, for all that I know. His home hasn't been burned to the ground. He hasn't had all his hard work for two years destroyed. He hasn't been shut up in his own sheep-pen and fired at by a lot of scoundrels, led on, it may be, by his own cousin. Oh, no. Of course he hasn't begun it. And if he had, it would probably be not worth considering by you, Mistress Prudence. But I think of it, and I'll have it out of that traitor, if he is my cousin, before I leave this house!" And Jairus quickly left the room.

In the hall he met Jeremiah, who was searching for him, and doubtless the meeting prevented further trouble between the cousins; for the old soldier drew the lad with him, on the plea that he had something

of importance to tell him, and together they went out of the house.

"We can't take Prudy to Mrs. Schuyler," said Jeremiah; "for the sergeant tells me that she's gone down near Albany. It seems her place up near Saratoga isn't considered safe any longer. It may be burned up before this, too."

"It isn't the only place that has been burned by the rascals," muttered Jairus.

"Right, my son, quite right; but Mistress Catherine Schuyler has borne it bravely, which I'm afraid is a little more than can be said of every one." Jairus's face flushed at the rebuke, but as he remained silent, Jeremiah continued: "She herself came all the way up there from Albany to see to movin' out her furniture and stuff when she heard of the danger. And while she was there General Phil himself sent her word of what Burgoyne was up to, and told her to burn the grain and crops in the fields. And it seems she did, too, and they do say, as Sergeant Miller is a tellin' me, that she even set fire to 'em herself and with her own hands. That's the lady for you, that is! She's a fit wife for General Philip Schuyler, the best man in the North."

"But I don't see but that we'll have to take Mistress Prudence to Albany, then. That's all the difference it makes to us," said Jairus, still somewhat angry.

"No. Sergeant Miller is going to put me in command of these prisoners, and he and two others

are going to Albany, and they'll look after the lass. That'll save you and me all the trouble, ye see."

The old soldier glanced keenly at Jairus as he spoke, to see the effect of his words, but the lad was still angry, and Jeremiah was sadly puzzled.

His suggestion, however, was carried out. The following morning Jeremiah assumed charge of the prisoners, and as they were about to start, Prudence approached Jairus as he stood near the house.

"Good by, Jairus," she said, reaching forth her hand as she spoke. "I'm sure I thank you for all you've done for me."

"You're welcome."

"And, Jairus, I think you were very brave to hold the Panther's feet as you did," and she turned abruptly and left him.

The lad was not quite certain whether Prudence was serious, or was still poking fun at him; but the call to advance came, and sadly puzzled as to the ways of womankind, Jairus joined Jeremiah and the prisoners on their march to the camp.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE ADVANCE OF JOHN BURGOYNE.

The march to the American camp with the Tory prisoners was not a long one, and the leaders met with no mishap by the way. Arthur Goodwin was sullen and silent, and manifested no disposition to enter into conversation with his cousin; but as Jairus also had a similar feeling, neither of the boys felt any regret at the silence.

There were six men in the party of prisoners and there were four men, besides Jairus and Jeremiah, to guard them, and as the latter were all armed no attempts to escape were made.

As they marched, the thoughts of Jairus were divided somewhat between his mother and brother, and Miss Prudence. The actions of that young lady were sadly confusing to Jairus, and he was unable to account for some of the feelings she had displayed. Her apparent tendency to make sport of him was more than atoned for by the tenderness with which she had thanked him, when they parted, for all his efforts in her behalf, and in spite of his irritation at her lightness, Jairus felt somehow as if the parting scene had betrayed her true feelings.

Still, there was her recognition of Arthur to be accounted for. How was it that she knew him? Where had she met him? And apparently, too, Arthur had been as pleased as she at the meeting. His anger at his cousin increased at the thought, and he glanced at him as he marched silently on in the midst of the party. Surely there were no greater traitors to be found than Arthur Goodwin and his father. Jairus thought of all the sufferings his own mother had endured, and his anger increased. The lad did not realize that the interview between Arthur and Prudence, which he had interrupted in the kitchen of the house where they had stopped, had had much to do with increasing his anger at his cousin, and that his treachery appeared to him darker than ever, now. But Jairus Goodwin was perhaps no exception to the rule, for every man is prone to deceive himself. Indeed, the person of all others who is the most easily deceived is one's own self. "Men believe that which they wish to believe," wrote the greatest of the Roman generals centuries ago, and the words are as true to-day as when Cæsar uttered them.

There was one comfort to Jairus, however, and that was that he was mounted, while Arthur was compelled to trudge on, on foot. He was, perhaps, selfish in this feeling, but Arthur so long had assumed a superior air in dealing with his cousins, that now, when the turn for Jairus to hold the higher place had come, his elation was but natural.

When, at last, the little party entered within the American lines and Jeremiah made his report, the prisoners were at once placed with those whom Timothy Murphy and his companions had secured. And Jairus and Samuel, all unbeknown to each other, had been standing only a few yards apart. So near do we all of us come at times to the very thing we most desire, and our eyes are holden and we see not.

The two lads now entered into the camp life, Samuel spending much of his time with his new friend Timothy, while Jairus was under the special care and protection of the old soldier Jeremiah.

To the last-named the return to the army was a source of supreme delight. He had been absent so long a time that his return was a novelty in itself. He never tired of listening to the story of the battle of Bennington, and the mention of the defeat of St. Leger never failed to rouse his enthusiasm to the highest pitch. But his excitement was to increase soon, for stirring experiences lay before the American army — experiences in which Jeremiah and our boys were to have no small share.

They heard how one of the Tory prisoners had been hanged: the leader who had boldly declared his mission from the time when he had been taken. The others were considered as prisoners of war, and were sent on to Albany for safe-keeping. Arthur Goodwin, of course, was in this number, and Jairus, when he learned of the action taken, thought that

possibly his cousin might see Prudence somehow during his captivity. Had he known what was actually to take place, perhaps the anger which the thought aroused might have been even more intense than it was; but the stirring experiences of the camp life soon drove most other thoughts from his mind, and he only at times recalled his cousin.

All the soldiers knew that the end must soon come. Many of the pioneers had now secured their crops, and had left home for the camp, their families in many instances having joined with others in abandoning their dwelling-places and seeking the shelter and protection of the blockhouses. Indeed, there was scarcely a time in the entire war of the Revolution when the militia served so willingly as they did near the close of Burgoyne's invasion. The death of Jane M'Crea, the success at Bennington, and the victory of those who had opposed the advance of St. Leger, all combined to bring this to pass.

And there were many ways in which these rude soldiers were kept busy before the final action took place. The march of Burgoyne's men was to be checked, his army harassed by scattering attacks day and night, his supplies were to be cut off, his way obstructed, and, indeed, everything done which lay within the power of these rough men of the frontier, who were governed by the dual thought of the dangers threatening their own homes, and the ravages that might follow the success of the invaders.

And the problem before the British army was now daily becoming more serious. Burgoyne had hoped to secure a large supply of horses as the result of the expedition to Bennington, but his hopes there were dashed, as we know. He had heard nothing from Howe or Clinton, and therefore knew not what he could depend upon from the South. His supplies had to be brought for the most part from Canada, and the difficulty of transportation was daily becoming greater. Wherever his army moved, the ditches the Americans had dug had to be filled in, and rude bridges constructed. And little parties of skilful riflemen, safely concealed within the vast forests through which he must move, harassed his men by day and by night.

No pompous proclamations were now sent forth into the surrounding regions. There were no boastful offers of mercy, no threatenings for the king's enemies. A strange hush had fallen over the sadly beset British general, and the problem was fast changing from one of devastating the land, to the protection of himself and his men.

But John Burgoyne was no coward. He had been over-confident when he set forth on his expedition, and, indeed, no one can blame him for the feeling; for all things seemed to favor him.

He had a large and well-equipped army, soldiers trained by the best of European generals were in his ranks, he was well supplied with money, and there was every prospect that the scattered people

among whom he was moving would soon rally beneath his victorious standard. But he was now striving to keep up the spirits of his men, and, despite his lack of teams, was doing his utmost to hasten forward from Lake George the supplies which had been sent down from Canada.

The 13th and 14th of September came, and the British army passed over from the eastern to the western bank of the Hudson and went into camp on the plain and on the heights of Saratoga.

And the American army lay only nine miles away, near Stillwater.

On the 15th, the British moved yet nearer, and advancing as far as Dovegat, took a good position and remained there for two days.

The excitement in each army was now becoming intense, for all knew that a battle could not be long delayed. Burgoyne sent out parties to repair the broken bridges and seek for information and supplies. Still, no word was received from that force which he had confidently believed was moving up the Hudson to join him at Albany.

On the 17th Burgoyne again moved, and advancing as far as "Sword's House," went into camp in a highly advantageous place.

And now the American army was only four miles away.

The first action here took place; for General Arnold, who had long since returned from his expedition up the Mohawk valley, with fifteen

hundred men, had endeavored to draw the attention of the British by harassing his flanks, but the nature of the ground over which he moved had rendered his efforts unavailing. On the 18th, Burgoyne moved still nearer to the American lines and took a position, which he immediately proceeded to strengthen by throwing up intrenchments and redoubts. A deep ravine extended parallel with his lines and directly in front of them, and added much to the strength of his position.

And now the American army lay only two miles away.

And General Burgoyne now proceeded to make his arrangements for an advance. First, he sent out skilled men to examine the paths and roads which led towards the American camp. When he had received the desired information, he at once made preparations for an attack.

The right of his army, which General Fraser was to lead, was to pass by a circuitous way around the head of the ravine, and without leaving the high ground was to occupy a position from which it could cover the advance of the centre and the left wing.

General Burgoyne himself was to command the centre, and was to move directly towards the American lines, and form his men in line of battle when they had gained the summit, on the south side of the ravine; but they were not to begin the attack until the right wing had moved, as we have described, around the head of the ravine, and the left

wing had repaired the bridges, and were ready to act with their companions-in-arms.

General de Riedesel was to lead the left wing, which was to be made up mostly of Hessians and artillery. This wing was to march by the main road, which led down through the meadows and along the western bank of the Hudson. The Indians and Tories were to be skirmishers in the battle, or flanking parties for the right wing.

Having also arranged for carefully guarding the bateaux, on which the stores of the army had been placed, Burgoyne thought that all things were ready for the advance which was now to be made.

We must also stop for a hasty glance at the plans of the Americans, who were well aware of all the movements of the enemy which lay before them. The position they occupied was a good one, and near to Bemis's tavern. Good as it was, however, the Americans had strengthened it by throwing up breastworks and redoubts.

General Gates was to command the right wing of his army, which was to occupy the meadows that lay between the high ground and the river, and was also to hold what was known specifically as the "high ground," up to the very foot of Bemis's Heights.

General Arnold was to command the left wing, and among his forces were to be the strangely clad men of Daniel Morgan. The position which Arnold was to hold was Bemis's Heights itself, and also some of the high ground off to his right.

Between the two divisions the ground was low, and had been cultivated, but the hills were still covered with a heavy growth of timber.

Directly in front of the right wing was a deep ravine, which extended in a direction parallel to the American lines. In this ravine tall trees were growing closely together, and in many respects it was very similar to the one which was near the British.

Still another ravine, somewhat like the other two, lay about half-way between the two armies.

A small body of light troops had meanwhile been sent over to the eastern side of the Hudson, with orders to observe carefully the movements of the British and report at once anything which they saw of an unusual or suspicious character.

Early in the morning of the 19th of September (1777), the British advanced from their camp and prepared to move upon their enemies. The centre and the right wing were soon in readiness and were waiting for the signal to begin the battle. But the left wing had met with many more difficulties than it had anticipated, in repairing the bridges and opening up a way, and was consequently much delayed.

The forenoon passed, the sun mounted high in the heavens, but still the signal for the advance was not given.

At last, however, between one and two o'clock in the afternoon, the sharp report of three guns

fired in rapid succession was heard, and as this was known to be the signal agreed upon, the sharp commands rang out, the three divisions of the British army quickly responded, and together advanced to the attack.

No sooner were they in motion, however, than the American scouts and pickets, and various scattered bodies which had been stationed along the line of march, opened fire upon the advancing redcoats; but the march was not checked.

The British, officers and soldiers alike, were determined now. They all realized the desperate need they had of aid, and a battle was their only hope. No help had come, their supplies were nearly gone, and destruction was certain if they delayed longer.

On the other hand, a battle might not only bring relief, but a victory as well; and if only they could cut their way through those ever-increasing lines of the Americans they might succeed in scattering their enemies, and march on to success, and join those forces which they still fondly hoped were moving up the Hudson to meet them.

In view of all these things, and the rugged bravery which everywhere is characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon, whether his home is in the New World or the Old, these determined redcoats gave slight heed to the scattering fire which met them as they advanced, and pushed steadily on towards their foes. But the Americans, although they sadly lacked the

discipline and training of their cousins from across the sea, had sprung from the same stock and were ready to display something of the same determination.

Besides, they outnumbered the invaders now, and were defending their own homes and firesides. Consequently, it needed no prophet to foretell that the struggle which was to follow would be a terrible one. And terrible it was.

The first real portions of the battle now began, when the advancing British columns found themselves face to face with the riflemen of Daniel Morgan's dragoons.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

THE terrible riflemen who composed the regiment of Daniel Morgan had been sent, along with a detachment of light infantry, to oppose the progress of the British. Every man was eager for the contest, and when Major Morris, who was leading Morgan's band, rushed upon the advancing lines, he was so excited that he was borne beyond the men who were following him, and the dragoons, as a natural consequence, were soon scattered, being, as they were, without a leader; and, as the enemy were immediately reinforced, they were soon driven back.

But their movements had served to check the red-coated columns for a time, and as soon as General Gates learned of it, he at once ordered two regiments to advance to the assistance of Morgan's men.

General Arnold and the newcomers off to the left of the riflemen were evidently striving to turn Fraser's flank.

General Benedict Arnold never appeared to better advantage than at that time. Indeed, one of our

best of recent historians has declared that well would it have been for Benedict Arnold if he had been killed in the battle, or could have died soon after it. Alas! for his memory. So easy is it to overthrow by one act all that a lifetime of struggle and goodness can build up.

General Arnold was acting with all his customary promptness and dash. He and his men were fighting desperately; but they were so far outnumbered by the British that all their efforts were unavailing. And General Gates sent them no reinforcements now, for reasons which will become apparent as we go on.

At last the brave men were compelled to withdraw; but General Arnold at once saw the advantage which the woods afforded, and by a rapid countermarch he quickly turned, and with all his impetuosity advanced again against the very centre of the British, where, as we know, General John Burgoyne was himself commanding in person. And Arnold called upon his men to follow, and with all the fury of a man beside himself rushed upon the enemy.

His men bravely responded, and as they were soon strengthened by the timely arrival of some of the New England troops, they held their ground.

The contest soon became fearful. All the passions of mankind seemed to be let loose. Now one side would apparently gain a slight advantage, and again the other side would gain. The effect of the

reinforcements upon either side would at once become manifest.

Stubbornly fighting the ground almost inch by inch, pushed back by the other side, the men would rally and advance with fresh courage, whenever their new comrades joined them.

Burgoyne's left was unable to render much assistance, and while General Fraser gave the British all the aid in his power, it had not been deemed advisable for him to leave the high ground which he occupied.

The British, however, brought their artillery into play, and as the afternoon wore on, the Baron de Riedesel advanced to their aid with many of the Hessian troops; but the Americans could not be dislodged.

Still the awful struggle continued. Hour followed hour, but no sign of yielding on either side had yet appeared. One side was as determined as the other, and both realized fully what a victory or defeat would mean. The sun sank lower and lower, and the blood-red color of the sky seemed almost like a reflection of the ground over which the contestants were moving. The groans of the wounded were heard on every side, but even their own friends were seldom able to afford any aid or relief, for the struggle was desperate and the loss of a moment of time might be fatal.

At last the darkness crept on, and the end came; for the night could accomplish what the arms of

either side were unable to do. The roar of the guns ceased, the moving columns no longer advanced or retreated, and the end, at least for the present, had come.

The Americans retired from the field under cover of the darkness. No one pursued them, and there was no disorder in their appearance. They moved silently, it is true, and there were no shouts or songs of victory. Yet they claimed the victory as theirs, because they had met and held the British from advancing.

The British, however, claimed that the victory was theirs, because they had retained the field; but there was slight consolation in that fact, for the field was barren, and the glory of the battle was hardly to be called theirs.

The forces engaged in the contest had been nearly equal, the Americans having about three thousand men, and the British about five hundred more.

The loss of the Americans in killed, wounded, and missing was about three hundred, while that of the British was about six hundred; but the carnage among the latter was far greater. They had lost more officers than had the Americans, and some of their regiments had been almost cut into shreds.

One regiment, the sixty-second, which had come from Canada with five hundred men, went out of the battle with less than sixty effective men remain-

ing, and only four or five officers; while one artillery corps had lost thirty-six of its forty-eight men.

On the following day, both armies began to work to strengthen their positions. The British were still hoping for aid from General Howe, but no word had come of his advance. They were governed by the hope that this aid still would come before it should be too late, and were determined to hold their ground at every possible cost.

The Americans were doing their utmost to hold the British where they then were and prevent them from pushing on to Albany. The motives for quick action in either army were therefore urgent, and in both lines they labored with desperate haste. Works were thrown up on the western flanks of the armies, while on the left they were doing their utmost to protect their baggage and stores on the bateaux.

It is necessary now for us to pause and consider a trouble which had arisen among the Americans. As we have already seen, General Gates had refused to send reinforcements to Benedict Arnold, when the latter had been bravely striving to check the advance of the British, and the reason for this failure was well known at the time.

Congress had removed General Philip Schuyler from the command of the northern army, and placed General Horatio Gates in his place. Gates was in no way the equal of Schuyler. He lacked his

ability, his largeness of heart and mind, and was in every sense of the word a much smaller man.

That Congress should have taken such action, to-day seems very strange to us, but great as many of the men of that time doubtless were, they were still as easily swayed in some ways as any of our modern statesmen, whom we sometimes hear spoken of as being sadly degenerate. A careful and candid comparison, however, is not always to the disadvantage of the men of our own times. There is always a tendency on the part of some to magnify the men and deeds which are seen at a distance, and minimize those which are nearer. Perhaps the cause in part may be found in that knowledge we have of the weak points, as well as of the good, in those men whom we personally know, while of the distant and the dead the evil is either forgotten and unknown, or else is not reported. At least, we hear chiefly of the good, and are prone to ignore the bad.

A clique had been formed among some of the prominent men of 1777, which was composed of those who were strongly opposed to permitting General Washington to remain at the head of the American army. It is a source of great comfort to-day, to those who are struggling amidst heavy and pressing difficulties, to know that the great Washington himself had not only to meet the enemy in the field, but that he was beset by perils from those to whom he had naturally a right to look for support and aid. But as envy is ever the price

which a successful man must pay for his success, so George Washington himself was not to escape.

This clique, which was opposed to him, was made up of Generals Lee, Conway, Gates, and Mifflin, and they were aided by many of the members of Congress from New England, of whom James Lovell was the leader. The band came to be familiarly known as the "Conway Cabal," but to-day no one likes to trace his ancestry back to the men who composed it.

It was through the influence of this "cabal" that the removal of Philip Schuyler was brought to pass; for Schuyler was known as a warm and personal friend of George Washington, and in him the great commander, rightly as we know now, reposed the utmost confidence. Benedict Arnold, with all the warmth of his impulsive nature, had boldly and openly taken sides with Schuyler. He admired, as he believed in, the man, and the injustice with which he was being treated roused all his indignation and righteous wrath, and he was at no pains to conceal his real feelings.

The petty jealousy of General Gates was at once aroused when he joined the northern army and learned of Arnold's bold words and bolder feelings. Not only did the commander not afford him any assistance in his time of peril, but he tried resolutely to create an impression that Arnold had not done anything worthy of special note or mention.

Benedict Arnold was not one to submit tamely to what he considered an injustice, and many warm

words and harsh letters soon passed between him and General Gates, and the result of it all was that Morgan's riflemen and Major Dearborn's light infantry, who were considered as almost the choicest troops of the northern army, were withdrawn from Arnold's command.

The petty general even went farther; for at last he removed Arnold himself from all command, and even excluded him from headquarters, taking command himself of the left wing. This honor, however, he soon after bestowed upon General Lincoln.

The condition of the two armies remained now much as it had been. There were constant skirmishes and many light attacks by riflemen and scouts, but no open engagement took place.

In the British camp, the question of supplies was constantly becoming a more serious one. If Burgoyne retreated into Canada, he knew he would leave the American army free to exert all its energies against the army of Howe or Clinton, which he still firmly believed to be advancing up the Hudson. Besides, had he not boldly declared that "Britons never retrograde"? And to the determined leader it seemed almost impossible for him to turn back with such words hanging over him.

And then, a retreat was full of danger and difficulty. The matter was talked over many times in the councils which Burgoyne called of his officers, but no one was quite willing as yet to advocate that measure.

Supplies, however, were becoming very low in the British camp, and there was slight prospect of their being increased. On the 3d of October, the supply had become so low that the daily rations for the men were reduced. Despair seemed to be creeping over the entire army, and this was aggravated by the constant and scattering attacks by day and by night from the riflemen of the frontier.

In General Burgoyne's own report are these words: "From the 20th of September to the 7th of October the armies were so near that not a single night passed without firing and sometimes concerted attacks upon our advanced pickets; no foraging party could be made without great detachments to cover it; it was the plan of the enemy to harass the army by constant alarms, and their superiority of numbers enabled them to attempt it without fatigue to themselves. I do not believe either officer or soldier ever slept without his clothes during that interval, or that any general officer or commander of a regiment passed a single night without being upon his legs occasionally, at different hours, and constantly an hour before daylight."

Still, John Burgoyne was not ready to give up. His bold proclamation, and bolder words to his own officers, and the promises of speedy victory which he had made to their wives, held him back. Besides all that, he was a determined man and, with all the bull-dog tenacity of a hardy Englishman, was not ready to ask for quarter. He decided to wait for

the arrival of an answer to the word he had sent to Sir Henry Clinton, who was still in New York, before he decided what to do.

But his forage was becoming scarcer and scarcer, and starvation was threatening him and his army alike. His hesitation was not understood within the American lines. Sometimes it was thought that he was waiting for the arrival of reinforcements from Canada, and to head them off some of the rougher and more inexperienced men, who had come into the army fresh from their ploughs and fields, were stationed so as to cut them off, or harass them in case they should appear.

Again, it was thought that Burgoyne must know of troops coming to his aid from New York; or that a movement on the eastern bank of the Hudson, or away out on the extreme left, was in his mind.

The Americans took all the proper precautions to prevent the success of such possible attempts, but General Gates said not a word about advancing and attacking the British. It was known that they were in desperate straits, but the policy of delaying seemed best to the American commander.

His own forces, however, were in a far better condition than he fully realized at the time.

Looking back now, we can see that the final result which came was in a large measure the outcome of the carefully laid plans of Philip Schuyler. Schuyler sowed and Gates reaped the harvest; but

then, that is not the only instance known in history where one man has labored and another has entered into his labors.

Benedict Arnold also had had no small share in bringing to pass the present strength of the American army. His bold, impetuous courage, his marked ability, and, above all, his willingness to do himself whatever he asked of his men to do had made him the idol of the soldiers; and so contagious is courage that his own bravery had largely influenced the timid men, who, inexperienced and accustomed to regard the British redcoats as almost invincible, had recently joined the ranks.

The 7th of October came, and still John Burgoyne had not received word from New York. Something must be done, he now knew, and at once; and a marked change in his plans soon became apparent.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE FINAL STRUGGLE.

It had now been decided by the British leaders that it was not advisable for the army to remain longer in its present position. A movement against the left of the American camp was therefore planned, both for the purpose of discovering whether any retreat or advance was left, and also to cover the foraging parties, whose labors were of even greater importance to the redcoats than any movement by the army.

Accordingly, after having left forces on the heights and the plains, General Burgoyne in person, and accompanied by some of his ablest generals, with about fifteen hundred of his choicest troops, advanced and formed in a place distant from the American lines only about three-quarters of a mile. Tories and Indians were also sent forward to call attention to themselves, and, if possible, hold the Americans back.

But the American scouts were not idle; for they were watching every movement of the enemy, and when the latter formed about noon and their "bat-

men" had begun their work of foraging, the adjutant-general of the Americans was carefully examining the men and the position they had taken. This was a low ridge of ground, the right being occupied by Fraser's men, who were slightly protected by a crooked rail-fence, while the Hessians and the grenadiers were off on the left.

As soon as word of all this was brought to General Gates, he ordered Daniel Morgan's riflemen to march around through the woods and gain the right of the British, while others of the New England and New York troops were to advance against the left. The forests protected the advancing men from being seen, and it had been arranged that they were all to fall together upon the British forces before them.

The attack began suddenly upon the left, and as Morgan's riflemen at once rushed upon the right of the British, the engagement in a very brief time became general. Burgoyne's forces were the very flower of his army. The men had all seen active service, and had been trained in all the discipline of army life, while the men who led them were among the ablest generals of that age.

It was not long, however, before General Burgoyne perceived that he would not be able to stand before the terrible onslaught. His men were brave, but their enemies were equally brave and were fighting with a desperate courage.

He gave orders for one of his best regiments to

form a second line to secure the retreat of his forces; but while this was being done, the Hessians and grenadiers off on the left began to give way, and General Fraser was compelled to rush to their aid.

While General Fraser was leading his men, one of Morgan's riflemen, who carried a double-barrelled rifle and whose skill as a marksman had already become well known in the American camp, dropped upon one knee, and, taking careful aim at the British general, fired. General Fraser fell, mortally wounded, and the rifleman who shot him was none other than our old acquaintance, Timothy Murphy.

The Americans were fighting now with skill and determination. Success lay almost within their grasp, and they were struggling desperately to gain it.

General Burgoyne had given fresh orders for lines in the rear to be formed, and at last succeeded in withdrawing his scattered forces to them, but he had left behind him six pieces of artillery, all the horses had been killed, and many of his men were either wounded or dead.

The battle, however, was not yet ended. General Benedict Arnold had ignored the orders which General Gates had given him to keep out of the struggle, and already had been doing valiant service. He was rushing wildly from regiment to regiment, and his calls for the men to follow him were everywhere received with cheers of unbounded

enthusiasm. Whatever the leaders might think of Arnold, the men, at least, believed in him with all their hearts. And now he was leading his men against the position which Burgoyne had taken.

General Patterson's brigade had been driven back when Arnold, at the head of Colonel Jackson's regiment, advanced to the attack. Cheers were heard on every side, and both Arnold and the men seemed to be almost mad with the excitement of the battle. The Hessians abandoned the intrenchments they had been holding, under the dash of Arnold's charge, and in a brief time the right and rear of the British were open to the advance of the Americans.

But this battle, like that of a few days previous, was in the late afternoon, and once more the darkness crept on before the end came, and at last the men could no longer distinguish friend from foe, the guns became silent, the struggle was over, and the end had come.

This time, however, there was no dispute as to who had been the victors, for the Americans had won. About six hundred of the British were dead, wounded, or prisoners, while only about one hundred and fifty of the Americans were to be so classed.

General Arnold, however, had been severely wounded; for just as the victory seemed to be won, a ball had killed the horse on which he was riding and had fractured the general's leg.

The condition of the British now was more desperate than ever before. On the night of October 8th

Burgoyne changed his position, and the victorious Americans occupied the camp he had abandoned.

During the following day Burgoyne tried hard to draw the Americans on to make an attack; but, whatever the faults of Gates, he well knew how to make use of a victory and wisely declined the offer. The sound of guns seldom ceased, however, and a scattering fire was almost ceaselessly maintained.

General Gates now sent a detachment to Saratoga to cut off the retreat of the British in that direction, but the position there was too much exposed, and the men soon moved to the east bank of the Hudson.

Two thousand men were also sent to Fort Edward to prevent a return of the British there, while fifteen hundred men were sent farther up to hold the fords.

The British were aware of the march of all these men, but could only conjecture their object. But at about nine o'clock in the morning of the 8th they quietly, and with great secrecy, began a retreat to Saratoga. So hasty was this that about three hundred of the sick and wounded were abandoned. Through the rain and mud the disheartened redcoats moved, and at last gained the desired position.

The Americans did not move from the camp until the 10th, and at about four o'clock in the afternoon of that day their advanced guards came in sight of the enemy's position.

General Gates was for attacking it at once, but

his counsels were overruled, and it is even said that they were openly disobeyed by his fellow-officers; for they did not accurately know the exact position or force of the British. It is well for the name of Gates, and the success of the American cause, that no battle was attempted. The British were helpless and almost hopeless, and the end could not be far away. A few days of delay would accomplish easily what a battle might forfeit.

On the 12th of October, General Burgoyne called a council of his leading officers and placed before them the information he had gained. Distorted reports had been received of the numbers and purpose of the divisions which had been sent to the fords and to Fort Edward, but he knew that the American army had been largely increased, and was now well supplied with provisions and artillery. Their own bateaux had been destroyed. The British general then placed before his officers five propositions as to what might be done, but the council finally decided that their best course would be to leave their artillery and baggage in the camp, and retreat by night to Fort Edward, or if that should be found impossible, then to attempt to make a passage through the woods around the west side of Lake George; but the first four miles of the retreat must be without being discovered. The scouts soon after reported that this last measure would be impossible, and the project was soon abandoned.

But the condition of the British was hourly be-

coming more desperate. On the 13th it was known that rations for only three days remained. There was also no "rum or spruce beer" to be had. And day and night rifle-balls and grape-shot came pouring into the camp. The women had taken refuge in the cellars of the houses. Fear and consternation were on every side, and there was the constant expectation of an advance by the Americans. Surely the former proud boastings of "John Burgoyne, Esquire," placed him in a sad plight now.

On the 13th Burgoyne called another council, and placed before it all they already knew and what he had been able to learn in addition. Sadly and reluctantly it was admitted that only a surrender remained for them.

General Burgoyne soon drew up a letter to General Gates and at once despatched it to the American camp.

On the following day Gates's reply was received. He had demanded an unconditional surrender. This was rejected by the brave and desperate men, and Burgoyne's propositions were approved by his fellow-officers. If they could not surrender with honor, they could at least die without dishonor.

On the 15th, the council was again called, and as General Gates's replies and modified demands were considered honorable now, they were agreed to.

But John Burgoyne now began to delay. A Tory had come with the information that Clinton's

army was advancing to his aid. He did not know how reliable the word was, and he was eager to hold out a little longer time. His council, however, by a vote of fourteen to eight decided that it would be dishonorable now to repudiate their word. Had they done so, however, we now know it would have been unavailing; for John Burgoyne's army was beyond help.

We must turn for a moment and learn the cause of the delay in the appearance of the troops which were constantly looked for from New York.

Howe had expected to sail up the Hudson, as we know, and meet Burgoyne at Albany. Had he done so, the result of Burgoyne's invasion might have been far different from what it was; but for some reason, never understood even until this day, Howe had taken his fleet and gone sailing off for Chesapeake Bay. What he did there does not belong to this story, except in so far as he frustrated Burgoyne's plans by his failure to come to his aid.

Clinton had not considered it safe to leave New York before the arrival of fresh troops from England, but these did not come until the 29th of September. Clinton, well aware of the desperate straits of Burgoyne, then immediately sailed up the Hudson.

He easily outgeneralled Putnam and at once took Fort Clinton and Fort Montgomery. It is true, the Americans bravely defended the posts, but the task was hopeless, and both forts fell beneath the one

heavy blow. General James Clinton and his brother George were in command of the places, and they escaped up the river.

At about noon on October 10th, a horseman, evidently in desperate haste, approached General Clinton's quarters. When the sentinel challenged him, he had hastily replied, "I am a friend and seek General Clinton."

This horseman was a messenger the British General Clinton had despatched with a message for General Burgoyne, but the poor man did not know there was an American General Clinton also.

He immediately discovered his mistake, however, and was seen to swallow something hastily.

A good dose of tartar emetic was forced down his throat, and up came a little silver bullet, shaped like a small egg. A moment later the prisoner swallowed the bullet again, and declared he would never take another emetic.

When General Clinton suggested that he would hang him and then find the bullet by the aid of a knife, the prisoner yielded and swallowed the nauseous dose. Up came the silver bullet once more. It was found to be a sphere, and fastened together by a little screw. It was quickly opened, and on a piece of very thin paper the following note was read: —

FORT MONTGOMERY, October 8, 1777.

Nous y voici, and nothing now between us and Gates. I sincerely hope this little success of ours may facilitate your operations.

In answer to your letter of the 28th of September, by C. C., I shall only say, I cannot presume to order, or even to advise, for reasons obvious. I heartily wish you success.

Faithfully yours,

H. CLINTON.

GENERAL BURGOYNE.

The prisoner was soon after hanged, having been, as one has expressed it, condemned *out of his own mouth.* His letter was immediately sent to General Gates, and, doubtless, the knowledge that Clinton was advancing and was now so near had much to do with influencing the American general to modify his demands upon General Burgoyne.

On the 16th of October the articles were signed, and on the following day General Burgoyne went with Colonel Wilkinson to the green in front of old Fort Hardy on the north bank of Fish creek, where it was decided that the army should lay down their arms. The British general then requested that he might go on to the headquarters of the American army.

He was in full uniform and was accompanied by his aids and adjutant-general when he was met by General Gates at the head of the camp.

When the British commander had come "within a sword's length" of General Gates, he halted, and, after he had been introduced by Colonel Wilkinson, said, "The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner."

"I shall always be ready," replied General Gates,

"to bear testimony that it has not been through any fault of your excellency."

The other officers with him were then presented, and, doubtless, many more high-sounding speeches were made, but none of them could disguise the fact that the great northern army, led by the great General Burgoyne, had surrendered, and the invasion was at an end.

When the appointed time at length arrived, the British troops marched forth from their camp to the green and there deposited their arms, and emptied their cartridge boxes. Then they at once formed in line and, under an escort of dragoons, passed through the American camp, the band, all the while, playing the stirring strains of "Yankee Doodle."

In advance, rode General Gates and his staff, with the leading officers and their suites. The music was the only sound to be heard. There were eager expressions upon many of the rugged faces in the American lines as the procession passed, and we are told that many an eye was wet with tears.

The "invincible host" had fallen. All the boastings of John Burgoyne had failed. His soldiers were all prisoners, and the invasion was at an end. No more high-sounding proclamations were to be made, no more promises of the aid and tender mercies of the British. The colonies had won in the campaign, and the spirits of the struggling patriots rose high.

When the head of the sad and silent procession

arrived at the spot where the American generals were standing, General Burgoyne stepped back and drew his sword, and there, in the presence of both armies, presented it to General Gates.

The American general received it, held it a moment, and then, courteously, returned it to his foe. Five thousand seven hundred and sixty-three men and officers, and all the guns and munitions of war, thus fell into the hands of the victors. Surely it was a great day for the new nation, and the 17th of October, 1777, will never be forgotten as long as the United States shall endure, which, let us hope, will be for centuries to come.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CONCLUSION.

So ended the famous invasion of John Burgoyne. The campaign, upon which he had entered with such high hopes, had brought him only loss and ruin. Its effects upon the struggling nation were at once marked and marvellous, and a new hope seemed to possess all. The Tories in the region lost heart, and the Whigs became correspondingly elated. The Continentals had been able to withstand the well-trained European soldiers, and their generals had proven themselves more than a match for the leaders from across the sea.

General Schuyler had returned to the camp and, great-hearted man that he was, displayed no pettiness, now that the victory had been won by another; although he must have known what we all know now, that his own labors and plans had been the foundation of it all.

The British soldiers all unite in declaring that they were treated with respect by the American soldiers, as well as by their leaders. The wives of the generals came from Saratoga, where they had

been in dire suspense and danger and had taken refuge for days in cellars. The Baroness de Riedesel has left an account of it all, and her letters, we can assure our readers, are as interesting as they are valuable, and are well worth the time and study of all who are interested in this period of our nation's history.

A dinner followed the surrender, and the baroness describes the kindness with which General Schuyler not only provided for her comfort, but invited herself, her husband, and children to become his guests at Albany.

Burgoyne was there in the same capacity, also, for some days, and he, too, bears witness to the gentle spirit and courteous treatment which General Schuyler and his wife gave them.

The British general appreciated his treatment the more because it had been by his own orders that Schuyler's country place had been burned. What General de Riedesel must have thought is not known; but, as he had expected to receive General Schuyler's estates as a part of his own reward for his share in the campaign, his feelings, when he became a guest of the American general, may well be imagined.

The captured army was soon sent on to Boston, but its treatment there is something of which our nation has no cause to be proud. Delay, charge, and counter-charge followed, and few exchanges were then made. The troops were held in the

vicinity of Boston until the autumn of 1778, when they were all sent to Virginia. Drafts were made upon them for exchange, from time to time, but, in the end, many of them settled in the new country after the war was ended. This was especially true of the Hessians, and many of the detested "Dutch butchers" became true and loyal citizens of the new nation.

John Burgoyne was sent back to England, and, to his credit be it said, he in public and private expressed many times his high appreciation of the character of many of the leaders in the rebellion. Of Philip Schuyler he had always a very high opinion, and for him he especially spoke many words of praise and appreciation.

Clinton, when he learned of the fall of Burgoyne, turned back to New York; and Ticonderoga and Crown Point were soon after abandoned, thus again falling into the hands of the army without a drop of blood being shed, or a gun fired.

General Fraser, after he had been shot by Timothy Murphy, and when he knew that he must soon die, had requested that his body might be buried at six o'clock in the evening, and on the redoubt on the hill.

The request was granted, and the retreat was delayed for that purpose. In the midst of a heavy fire from the Americans, who were of course ignorant of what was occurring in the enemy's lines, the generals and their retinues followed the remains of the brave man to the spot which had been selected.

Of the scene Burgoyne himself said: "The incessant cannonade during the solemnity; the stately attitude and unaltered voice with which the chaplain officiated, though frequently covered with dust which the shot threw up on all sides of him; the mute but expressive mixture of sensibility and indignation upon every countenance, — these objects will remain to the last of life upon the mind of every man who was present."

Jairus Goodwin had been shot in the first battle. He had fallen insensible, and his friend Jeremiah Thatcher, who was with him, had at last succeeded in carrying the unconscious lad to the rear. There he nursed him tenderly, and in the course of a few days succeeded in carrying him away from the scenes of battle to an old house near Albany.

Jairus was unconscious during many days, and when first he became dimly aware of what was going on about him, it seemed to him that two persons were caring for him — one very like his mother, and the other strangely resembling the lass, Miss Prudence. It was some time before he became positive that he was not dreaming. His mother surely was before him, but when he tried to speak, she gently placed her hand upon his mouth and bade him be silent.

As soon as he was a little stronger, she told him her story. On the morning when the boys had so strangely disappeared from their home, she had

waited vainly for their return, and at last had gone to the sheep-pen. She had approached at the very time when the Indians had stopped there, but, catching a glimpse of them, had concealed herself in the thick underbrush and waited. After their departure, she was surprised at the appearance of the only family near them, who were making their way to Albany for safety. Assured that the boys had been carried away, she had sorrowfully joined the escaping family, and had succeeded in making her way to Albany, where she, with many others, came under the immediate protection of Mistress Catherine Schuyler. She was there when Prudence came, and in some strange way the knowledge of their acquaintance with Jairus became known to each other. Had Jairus seen the girl then, he would have had slight cause to feel angered at her lack of interest in him; for Prudence never seemed to tire of the one topic of conversation.

When Jeremiah had succeeded in bringing the wounded Jairus there, he had met Mistress Prudence soon after very unexpectedly, with the result that the lad secured the care of two nurses instead of one, and consequently improved rapidly, while Jeremiah went back to join the army.

A change seemed to come over Prudence as Jairus regained his strength, and again she seemed to him to be ever ready to make sport of him. The lad was sadly troubled by this, but his mother only smiled as she saw his irritation. Perhaps she

understood girls better than he did, and was not so puzzled to account for the change.

The change could not have been a serious one, however; for about four years later, in the clearing by the lake, on which a new and better house had been erected, there were two women who rejoiced in the title of Mistress Goodwin. One of these was the matronly mother of our boys, and the other a brief time before had been Mistress Prudence.

And Jairus did not return to the army. His wound had been a severe one, and rendered him unfit for the service, and he had given all his time and strength to the work on the frontier.

Samuel, however, had gone on with the forces, and, after many strange adventures and experiences, had returned and taken to himself the old home in Vermont; for his Tory uncle had relinquished all claim to it, doubtless glad to escape any notice at the time. For Tories of every kind and degree were not in the least popular among the newly made states.

Of Arthur Goodwin little was heard. He had returned to his father and his home, and took no further part in the struggle. But his friendship for his cousins was never renewed, and doubtless they were able to bear up cheerfully under the loss. The only meetings he had ever had with Prudence had been during his experience in the invasion, and for those, after he understood, Jairus cared little.

David Jones never entirely recovered from the

shock caused by the tragic death of Jane M'Crea. He lived for a half-century, and the sad story was told by him many a time at the firesides on the frontier. Indeed, the tale seems to have lost none of its interest even at the present day.

Timothy Murphy remained in the region long after the war was ended. His fleetness and his strength became famous, but he was known best of all for his skill with his wonderful double rifle. He seemed to cherish a special hatred against the Indians, and soon came to be regarded by them with awe. As more than forty of them had fallen by his own hand, to say nothing of those whom his terrible double rifle slew in battle, they had abundant cause to remember the rifleman, who, to the day of his death, bore upon the shield of his hunting-shirt those strange words, "Liberty or Death"; and at last he won both.

When peace came, there was one place Timothy Murphy loved best of all to visit, and that was a home on a clearing far up on the western shore of Lake Champlain. He never ceased to love the boys, but when there came a little lad into Jairus's home who rejoiced in the name of "Timothy Murphy Goodwin," the large-hearted Irishman's joy knew no bounds. For hours at a time he would follow the little fellow about, and as he grew he watched him with never-failing delight.

On the rude door of his home, Jairus had tacked a paper on which were written the following items:

THE ADVANCE OF JOHN BURGOYNE, ESQUIRE.

Arrives at Quebec	May 6, 1777.
Receives command of the army from General Carleton at Quebec	May 10, 1777.
Montreal	May 12, 1777.
Three Rivers	May 15–June 7, 1777.
Fort Chambly	June 10–June 14, 1777.
Isle au Noix	June 15, 1777.
Cumberland Head . . .	June 17–June 20, 1777.
River Bouquet	June 21–June 28, 1777.
Crown Point	June 29–June 30, 1777.
Four Mile Point	July 1, 1777.
Ticonderoga	July 1–July 6, 1777.
Skenesborough	July 7–July 23, 1777.
Fort Anne	July 25–July 28, 1777.
Pitch-pine Plains	July 29, 1777.
Fort Edward	July 30–August 13, 1777.
Duer's house (Fort Miller) .	August 14–September 10, 1777.
Batten Kill	September 11–September 13, 1777.
Schuyler's house (Saratoga)	September 13–September 15, 1777.
Dovegat	September 16, 1777.
Sword's house	September 17–September 18, 1777.
Freeman's house, on the field of battle,	September 19, 1777.
Freeman's house	September 20, 1777.
Camp on Freeman's farm .	September 21–October 7, 1777.

RETREAT OF JOHN BURGOYNE, ESQUIRE.

Wilbur's Basin, near the redoubts at the river,	October 8, 1777.
Dovegat	October 9–October 10, 1777.
Saratoga	October 10–October 17, 1777.
Half Moon	October 18, 1777.
Albany	October 18–October 20, 1777.
Worcester, Mass.	November 4, 1777.
Marlborough, Mass. . . .	November 5, 1777.
Cambridge	November 7, 1777.
Embarks for England . .	April 15, 1778.

Before this placard the large and the small Timothy would stand, while the elder would relate all the details of the famous invasion and retreat. And in time, young Master Timothy Murphy Goodwin became thoroughly familiar with the story, perhaps at last almost as familiar as many of our young readers, who are not so fortunate in their names.

Of the young sergeant whom Jeremiah and Jairus abandoned on the island, when they laid violent hands upon his cat-boat, nothing was ever heard. Doubtless he escaped, for he never returned to claim the boat, which Jeremiah now considered as his own. Many a trip did he make in it across the lake on his visits to Jairus, but his ownership was never disputed.

Alexander Bryan was of incalculable assistance to General Gates, and, indeed, it was commonly reported that he was the first to bring the American commander the information of Burgoyne's final advance. General Gates, however, forgot to mention his name or his assistance when he made out his reports. But then, General Gates had a habit of forgetting the names of those to whom honor belonged, and doubtless the famous scout bore up under his neglect, as Schuyler, Arnold, and many others were compelled to do.

The work of Schuyler, Gates, Lincoln, Arnold, and others was not ended; for the war was not over when the invasion of John Burgoyne was crushed.

Of some of them our histories record the bravest deeds; of others, silence is the best portion.

The invasion of John Burgoyne was ended, and private and officer, Whig and militiaman, had done their best. The story of their struggles has come down to us, and we may profit by their examples. There is need of the same devotion, the same courage and unselfishness, and the same patriotism to-day. We can best honor our honorable fathers, by upholding that which they have bequeathed to us as a noble heritage; for the land for which they struggled has become ours without a struggle. We can at least strive to hold up that to which they clung so desperately in the trying times of Burgoyne's invasion.

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